

THE CANONESSES AND EDUCATION IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

BY

SISTER MARY PIA HEINRICH, M. A.

*of The Sisters of Divine Providence
San Antonio, Texas*

A DISSERTATION

*Submitted to the Catholic Sisters College of the
Catholic University of America in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree, Doctor of Philosophy*

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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PREFACE

The aim of this dissertation has been to determine the extent and character of the education imparted to girls in the institutions of canonesses, and to ascertain the rank these institutions held as centers of education for women, prior to the thirteenth century. Except for the "canonesses" in the early Christian centuries—an insight into whose history is necessary for an understanding of the history of canonesses in the later ages—this study has been confined to the northern European countries, especially France, Belgium and Germany, for which a greater amount of material was available.

A peculiar difficulty met with in this inquiry arose from the divergent views of authorities on the history of the order itself. Although in some instances suggestions have been offered as to the probable solution of certain questions, no definite attempt has been made to prove or disprove conflicting opinions on purely historical matters, as this was beyond the scope of this dissertation. In this respect the scholarly researches of K. H. Schäfer, on the history of secular canonesses in Germany, have been an invaluable aid. The writer is not unaware of the serious criticism this work has received, but is of opinion that with other trustworthy authorities, entertaining similar views, the work furnishes, on the whole, a reliable historical basis for the institution of canonesses.

The author of this dissertation makes grateful acknowledgement of her deep indebtedness to her major professor, the Very Reverend Patrick J. McCormick, Ph.D., Dean of the Catholic Sisters' College, under whose kindly and efficient direction this study has been pursued and completed; to her other professors, the Reverend Doctor G. Johnson and the Reverend Doctor P. W. Browne, whose courses in the Philosophy of Education and Church History have offered very valuable suggestions. To her Superiors and Congregation she is indeed grateful for the special opportunities and advantages she has enjoyed as a student of the Catholic Sisters College.

SISTER MARY PIA HEINRICH.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY—HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE INSTITUTION OF CANONESSES

The title canonica, derived from the Greek *κανων*, canon or rule, designated, in general, those widows and virgins who, in communities or in private homes, observed the *vita canonica* or canonical life; that is, those women who lived according to the *regula ecclesiastica*, or *ordo ecclesiasticus*. In its more restricted sense, it applied to the widows and virgins who were supported by the Church and whose names, together with those of the clerics belonging to a particular church, were inscribed in a register or catalogue, also styled *κανων*. The latter meaning of the term *κανων* has been most frequently accepted as the origin of the name canonica or canoness. A well-founded objection against the acceptance of the term in this sense arises from the fact, that the canonesses, with whose names and social position we are better acquainted, were rich and high-born ladies who did not need the support of the Church. The former signification of the term *κανων*, which is very clearly attached to it in the legislation of early synods and the Carolingian capitularies, when mention is made of canonesses and their rule of life, has therefore been accepted in this treatise.¹

The title *κανονική* or canoness appears in the writings of St. Basil, St. Chrysostom and other writers of the Eastern Church more or less frequently from the fourth century.² This appellation, however, as in the case of clerics who lived in common under the *regula ecclesiastica*, and who were known before the twelfth century by various names, was not invariably applied to virgins and widows living under regulations drawn up from the canons of the Church and the writings of the Fathers. In the Western Church particularly, the name was rarely used in

¹ Cf. Schäfer, *Die Kanonissenstifter im deutschen Mittelalter*, 26 ff., 120 ff. Stuttgart, 1907; Martigny, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Chrétiennes*, 99. Paris, 1865; Bingham, *Origines Ecclesiasticae*, I, 48 f. London, 1843.

² Schäfer, ut supra.

the earlier centuries of the Middle Ages; the various titles used being that of *Deo sacrata*, *ancilla Dei*, *ancilla Christi*, *famula Dei*, but under these names were known also the widows and virgins living in the monastic state. The most frequent designation for a canoness as well as nun during these centuries was that of *sanctimonialis*, also *sancta monialis* and, in the later centuries of the early Middle Ages, that of *soror*. By modern writers, canonesses are often indiscriminately spoken of as nuns, a practice which apparently is sanctioned by the fact that it is at times difficult to draw a clear distinction between canonesses and nuns, as far as their mode of life is concerned; regular canonesses in particular being nuns in the real sense of the term. Of other titles applied to secular canonesses, that of *domicella* and *domina* were very commonly used. The title canoness, *canonica*, occurs however—especially in legislative documents—throughout the early Middle Ages more or less frequently, and gradually becomes, from the end of the twelfth century, the ordinary term applied to widows and virgins leading the *vita canonica*. The form *canonissa* appears oftener from the fourteenth century and has been used by preference since the sixteenth.³

Canonesses, according to the accepted meaning of the term, are the direct and legitimate successors of the early Christian virgins, having the same rights and the same duties.⁴ Although not designated by that name, they existed since the earliest centuries of the Church; for there were widows and virgins from the time of the Apostles who chose by preference the celibate life, and, while living in the privacy of the paternal home, observed the rules formulated by ecclesiastical legislation and the regulations for virgins given by the Fathers. The writings which treat of the state of the *Deo sacratae*, and of individual members of them, are very numerous.⁵ They are spoken of several times under the title of *κανονικαί* in the letters of St. Basil. One of these letters is addressed to certain *κανονικαί* in which he expresses his satisfaction that the rumors of a disordered life, current about them, had proven false upon investigation.⁶ Another of his letters, St. Basil addressed to the *κανονική* Theodora.⁷ In this

³ Ibid., 121 ff.

⁴ Heimbucher, "Das Kanonissen-Institut." Roloff, *Lexicon der Pädagogik*, II, 1082. Freiburg i. Br., 1913.

⁵ Cf. Wilpert, *Die Gottgeweihten Jungfrauen in den ersten Jahrhunderten der Kirche*, 1 ff. Freiburg, 1892.

⁶ Ep. 52. Migne, *Pat. Gr.*, XXXII, 391.

⁷ Ibid., 647.

letter he evidently enlarges on the life to which Theodora had devoted herself. He speaks of the customary modesty in dress, reserve in intercourse with men, frugality at table, and the abandonment of superfluities, all of which he enumerates by way of recommendation only, and not as if to impose anything new. Hence, these practices were evidently what was required by the rules and regulations observed by widows and virgins called *κανονικάί*. From these and other Greek texts which mention the *κανονικάί* as an officially recognized part of the community, it seems that the early canonesses were "pious women who devoted themselves to education, district visiting, funerals, and various charitable works, and living in a community apart from men."⁸ Their religious obligations were apparently limited to the practice of the Christian virtues and the assiduous attendance at the liturgical meetings; they differed in this from nuns who were bound by the obligations of their vows.⁹ If we admit the opinion of Du Cange,¹⁰ that the forty deaconesses, officially appointed at the Church of Constantinople under Emperors Justinian and Heraclius, were canonesses rather than deaconesses, it appears certain that the number of canonesses was considerable in the Eastern Church during the sixth and seventh centuries. At any event, we know that the organization of canonesses, as a more liberal form of monasticism, developed first in the Eastern Church.

With the development of monasticism communities of "canonical virgins" appear to have frequently adopted distinctly monastic observances and to have contracted one or more of the essential obligations of the religious life, determined by the vows of religion. Inasmuch as these communities of canonesses observed to a greater or less extent the regular life of monastic virgins, they became known, in later centuries, as regular canonesses; the communities of regular canonesses being further distinguished from each other as canonesses of St. Augustine, St. Benedict or other religious founder, according to the rule which they followed. As secular canonesses were known those widows and virgins who, like the early Christian widows and

⁸ *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Schaff, VIII, 219, note 4. (Sec. Series); Thomas-sin, *Discipline de l'Eglise*, P. II, 134.

⁹ Cabrol, *Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie*, "Chanoinesses," by H. Leclercq. Paris, 1913.

¹⁰ Cf. Schäfer, 57.

virgins, led a life regulated by ecclesiastical rules for virgins and the prescriptions of the Fathers.

Although we do not find that the title *canonica* was applied to the early Christian widows and virgins in the Western Church, it is nevertheless certain that many of them closely resembled the canonesses in the Eastern Church, both as to their manner of life and the duties with which they were charged. Thus, for instance, St. Cyprian (d. 258) in his famous treatise *De habitu virginum*¹¹ enjoins nothing which differs from the observances mentioned by St. Basil in his letter to Theodora. Nor does St. Ambrose in his treatise *De virginibus*¹² prescribe any other rules. On the contrary, his description of the life of the virgins at Bononia conveys the impression that they observed the *regula canonica*.¹³ That the same can be said of the other early communities of virgins follows from the account which St. Augustine gives of the communities of men and women he had seen when visiting Rome.¹⁴ From the appreciation which St. Augustine evinces for this kind of life it seems probable that he introduced it later in the communities of virgins which he established in Africa. Besides, his rule for the virgins of Hippo, known as the Rule of St. Augustine, and which was later adopted by most institutions of regular canonesses, is evidently a summary of the regulations generally observed in the communities of ecclesiastical virgins.

It can hardly be doubted that many of the early communities of widows and virgins were attached to various churches and performed functions similar to those of the canonesses in the Greek Church. The best evidence for this is found in a letter of St. Augustine to Bishop Boniface,¹⁵ in which he very clearly states that the early Christian virgins took care of abandoned children; and in another, addressed to Benenatus,¹⁶ in which he speaks of the vocation of a girl who had evidently been raised in the convent at Hippo. Other indications are furnished by the third synod of Carthage (397), which enjoins on priests and bishops the care of consecrated virgins,¹⁷ and also by the synod held, probably the following year, in the same city, which ordains,

¹¹ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, IV, 434 ss.

¹² *Ibid.*, *Pat. Lat.*, XVI, 187 ss.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 205.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 1340.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, *Pat. Lat.*, XXXIII, 362.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1069 s.

¹⁷ Mansi, *Collectio Amplissima Conciliorum*, III, 885. Paris, 1901.

in canon twelve, that the widows and virgins appointed to assist at the baptism of women should have sufficient knowledge to teach feminine catechumens the responses for baptism, and to instruct them in their duties.¹⁸

It appears that from an early date a distinction was made between those virgins who were solemnly consecrated by the bishop and those who simply lived a life of virginity without this consecration.¹⁹ St. Eustochium, St. Demetrias and St. Marcellina, sister of St. Ambrose, evidently belonged to the class of consecrated virgins. Both classes lived originally in the privacy of the paternal home, and the custom continued even after the establishment of monasteries. The sister of King Clovis, for instance, who was a consecrated virgin, seems not to have lived in a monastery. Pope St. Symmachus apparently made a distinction between these two classes of virgins in a decretal to St. Cæsarius, archbishop of Arles, in which he pronounces an anathema against those who espouse a virgin consecrated to God; while in the canon following he merely forbids the marriage with virgins who have passed many years in a convent.²⁰ This supposition is evidently proved by the decision of the fifth council of Orleans (549), which ordains that in monasteries of women, where the cloister was observed, candidates should pass one year in probation, while in those "*ubi non perpetuo tenentur inclusæ*" they should receive the monastic habit only after they had spent three years in probation, during which time they are to wear the secular dress. If after that they return to the world and marry they are to be excommunicated. The same penalty is decreed against those widows and virgins who professed a celibate life in the world, if they married in spite of their vow. The fact, that there is no mention made of virgins solemnly consecrated by the imposition of the veil, Thomassin considers as evidence that they differed from those which are mentioned in the decrees of this council.²¹ Probably the institutions for which the council prescribed a novitiate of three years were institutions in which the *vita canonica* was followed.²²

The early "canonical" virgins differed from the "monastic" virgins through the distinctly ecclesiastical functions which they

¹⁸ Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte*, II, 71.

¹⁹ Esser, "Nonnen." Wetzter u. Welte, *Kirchenlexikon*, IX, 436; Thomassin, *op. cit.*, P. II, 127.

²⁰ Thomassin, *ut supra*.

²¹ *Op. cit.*, 128; Mansi, *Coll. Con.*, IX, 133 s.

²² Schäfer, 42.

performed in the churches to which they belonged. Their particular duties ranked them among the lower ranks of ecclesiastical officers, whence also their appellation "virgines ecclesiasticæ," or *παρθένοι ἐκκληστικάί*, as they are styled by the Greek historian Sozomen.²³ These duties were, however, of an inferior nature compared to those of deaconesses. In general, they seem to have consisted in the attendance at funerals, which still appears part of their function many centuries later, according to an annotation to the *Concordia Regularum* of St. Benedict of Aniane, "ubi canonicæ sunt mulieres, quæ funerum curam etiam gerebant."²⁴ A valuable item of information explaining the functions of ecclesiastical virgins is obtained from an incidental notice in the enactments of a synod held at Paris in 829. It is stated there that some women take the veil, i. e., enter the state of sanctimoniales living in the world, in order to be able to become guards (excubatrices, i. e., doorkeepers) and administratrices in their respective parish churches.²⁵ We also hear of their taking care of the altars and church vestments, even of their administering Holy Communion to the faithful: "Quorundam relatu didicimus in quibusdam provinciis contra legem divinam canonicamque institutionem feminas sanctis altaribus se ultro ingerere sacrataque vasa impudenter contingere et indumenta sacerdotalia presbiteris administrare et . . . corpus et sanguinem Domini populis porrigere."²⁶ Although this report, made by the bishops to Louis the Pious in 829, is evidently intended to bring to his notice existing abuses, it is significant as an illustration of the occasional extensiveness of the church functions of canonesses. The chief obligation of canonesses, however, in connection with church service, was, at all times, that of prayer in common which took early the form of the canonical hours. Canon one hundred and three of the synod of Carthage, held in 398, ordains that the widows supported by the Church are to be fervent in the service of God;²⁷ and the synod of Toledo (400) reminds the virgins and widows consecrated to God that they are not permitted to chant the antiphones privately in their homes, and that they ought to sing the

²³ *Historia ecclesiastica*, lib. 8. c. 23, in Migne, *Pat. Gr.*, CLXVII, 1574 s.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, *Pat. Lat.*, CIII, 950; Schäfer, 33.

²⁵ Schäfer, 30; Mansi, *Coll. Con.* XIV, 564.

²⁶ Quoted by Schäfer, 32.

²⁷ Hefele, *op. cit.*, II, 76.

vespers in church, or at least in common with the bishop, priest or deacon.²⁸

Under the famous Rules of St. Basil, St. Benedict, and others based on them, the monastic life of women, like that of men, became established early on a regular basis. The same cannot be said of canonesses. Their organizations decreased in importance in proportion as the monastic life progressed among women—and it will be remembered that the organization of monasteries for women kept due pace with the establishment of monasteries for men. It is truly astounding how rapidly the monastic life propagated among the newly Christianized nations in the West. In Vienne alone and its vicinity there were in the seventh century six monasteries for men and five for women. Of these, two called Saint André, numbered each one hundred moniales.²⁹ Similar conditions prevailed wherever the Christian faith produced the religious and moral conversion of the people.

Though monasticism tended to absorb and supplant the canonical life among women, there remained, nevertheless, numerous traces of it throughout the earlier centuries of the Middle Ages. They are undeniable evidence that the institution at least maintained itself in spite of the growing influence of monasticism, and the attitude assumed towards it by the Church. The pre-Carolingian period, during which the monastic movement developed so widely in Gaul and the British Isles, is the least known period in the history of canonesses. Many historians, who discard the theory of the origin of canonesses from the institution of the early Christian virgins, date the foundation of the institution of canonesses from the eighth or ninth century, from which time it is better known and becomes first definitely organized.³⁰

In Italy, where the communities of the early Christian virgins were so numerous³¹ and renowned, the Rule of St. Benedict early superseded the *regula canonica*. There existed, however, several ancient communities in which the *vita canonica* appears to have been continuously followed. The *sanctimoniales* of St. Cyriaco at Rome, for instance, seem to have adopted the Rule of St.

²⁸ Ibid., II, 79.

²⁹ Besse, *Premiers Monastères de la Gaule Meridionale*, in *Revue des Questions Historiques*, LXXI, 399 f.; Mabillon, *Annales Ordinis S. Benedicti*, I, 96. Lucæ, 1703–39.

³⁰ Cf. Hélyot, II, 59; Stephen, II, 68; Allaria, op. cit., III, 289; Leclercq, op. cit., III, 253.

³¹ Cf. Heimbucher, I, 197 ff.; S. Augustini, *De moribus eccles. c. 33*, in Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXXII, 1339.

Benedict only in the eleventh or twelfth century; for before that time they enjoyed the use of private property and were always called ancillæ Dei instead of monachæ. Their institution furnished the model for Gernrode, an institution of canonesses founded about 960.³² Two very ancient institutions of canonesses existed also at Pavia, one being established in a former palace of Theodoric the Great. The most ancient community, however, of sanctimoniales observing the *vita canonica* was that connected with the Basilica of St. Agnes on the *via Nomentana* in Rome. Its foundation goes back at least to the fifth century, if not to an earlier date.³³

Significant for the history of institutions of canonesses in Italy are several notices of the office of deaconesses, both because the deaconesses were usually chosen from the ranks of canonesses,³⁴ and because they appear regularly as superiors of communities of ecclesiastical virgins.³⁵ There is still preserved a manuscript of the deaconess Theodora of Pavia, dated from the year 539;³⁶ deaconesses were also present at a synod held at Rome in 743,³⁷ and took part in the procession which graced the entry of Charlemagne into the city of Rome in the year 800.³⁸ They are further mentioned in several documents of the tenth and eleventh centuries.³⁹ These notices clearly prove that in Italy, where we would naturally expect least evidence of the existence of canonesses, the institution not only maintained itself, but also that canonesses were sufficiently numerous, and their position in the Church of such importance, as to merit at least official recognition.

In France and Belgium communities of women, organized under the *regula canonica*, were probably numerous during the Merovingian period. The rules of St. Benedict and St. Columba gained the ascendancy over other rules only in the seventh century, and probably not as readily in convents of women as in those of men; for there were still in the ninth century numerous churches in France connected with institutions of canonesses.⁴⁰ Of the two institutions of canonesses in the diocese

³² Schäfer, 4, 23, 74.

³³ *Ibid.*, 94.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 50, note 2.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 51 ff., 60.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 48.

³⁷ *Loc. cit.*

³⁸ *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, 11, 6; Schäfer, *loc. cit.*

³⁹ Cf. Schäfer, 48; Ughelli, *Italia Sacra*, 1, 121, 124.

⁴⁰ Schäfer, 6.

of Le Mans, one was converted into a Benedictine convent only in the ninth century. In other places they were probably more numerous, for we hear of "*canonicæ virgines per diversa loca Domino militantes*."⁴¹ To this period belong also the foundations of some of the more famous institutions of canonesses in the Rhineland. Before the beginning of the eighth century there existed the institutions of St. Radegund at Poitiers, founded originally under the "*regula canonica*"; St. Glodesindis and St. Peter at Metz, St. Mary and St. Peter at Rheims, St. Andrew at Vienne, St. Julian at Auxerre, Baume les Dames in the diocese of Besançon; in the north the institutions of Nivelles, Andenne, Moustier on the Sambre and Munster Belise in Belgium, Pfalzel and St. Irminen at Trier, St. Mary of the Capitol at Cologne, probably Hohenburg in Alsace, Säckingén, one of the oldest and most renowned institutions of canonesses, and others not less distinguished.⁴²

From the eighth century onward foundations of institutions of canonesses on the continent were mostly confined to Germany, where they were most prosperous and flourished longest. From the eighth and ninth centuries date the foundations of the institutions of St. Cæcilia at Cologne, Moorsel near Alost, Gerresheim, Kaufungen, Fraumünster at Zürich, St. Ehrentrud at Salzburg, Marienmünster at Worms, SS. Cyprian and Cornelius at Buchau, Obermünster at Regensburg, and Andlau.⁴³ Judging from the number of foundations, we must admit that the Merovingian period forms a very important epoch in the development of canonical institutions of women. Even if details concerning them are rare, the notices which prove their existence and, apparently, their rapid increase also, show that the institution prospered in spite of the attitude assumed towards it by the Church.

As in Italy, so also in France, we meet with communities of *sanctimoniales*, observing the *regula canonica*, which were ruled by deaconesses. The institution seems, however, to have met with much less favor there than in Italy, for we find frequent rulings of synods, at an early date, which aimed at its suppression. Particularly noteworthy in this respect are the canons enacted by the synods of Oranges (441), of Epaon (517), and of

⁴¹ *Ut supra*.

⁴² Schäfer, 6, 70 ff.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 72 f. For particulars concerning the dates of foundations, founders and available sources see Schäfer, 70-74 and 233-242.

Orleans (533). That the institution was not entirely abolished is due to the fact that this legislation affected only a number of provinces. While we find as late as the tenth century, in the city of Rome alone, six abbesses recorded who had received the consecration of deaconesses, there were relatively few who had received this consecration in France.⁴⁴

Institutions of canonesses became more firmly established and definitely organized after the promulgation of the rule and decrees of the synod of Aachen in 816. It appears that regular discipline had relaxed considerably in Benedictine convents as well as those of the canonical order. The Benedictine Rule had evidently suffered in many convents of women such extensive modifications that their mode of life differed little from that of canonesses.⁴⁵ In some instances, too, it was definitely abandoned for the more liberal rule of canonesses. Berlière believes that the Belgian institutions of Thorn, St. Waudru, Nivelles, Andenne and Maubeuge observed the Benedictine Rule at first.⁴⁶ According to Bonanni, however,⁴⁷ St. Waudru and Maubeuge, among other convents in Hainaut, were organized originally as regular canonesses under the Rule of St. Augustine. His opinion concerning St. Waudru is corroborated by a letter of protection issued to that institution by Pope Lucius III, in 1182, "*ut ordo canonicus, qui secundum Deum et b. Augustini regulam in eodem loco institutus esse dinoscitur, perpetuis ibidem temporibus inviolabiliter observetur.*"⁴⁸ Many similar assumptions would, no doubt, prove equally incorrect upon closer investigation and show that canonical institutions of women were much more numerous than is ordinarily believed. Among institutions which might have been founded under the Benedictine Rule, or at least at some time or other came under its influence, must be mentioned Marienrode, or Wittmerschen in Westphalia, Andlau in Alsace, Kaufungen and Herford.⁴⁹

The ninth century, called the Westphalian period, inaugurated in Germany one of the most prosperous periods in the history of canonical institutions. From this century date the foundations of Meschede, Herford, Nottuln, Vreden, Freckenhorst,

⁴⁴ Schäfer, 53, 56.

⁴⁵ Cf. Hélyot, VI, 397 ff.

⁴⁶ *Monasticon Belge*, I, 327 s. Bruges, 1890.

⁴⁷ *Ordinum Religiosorum in Ecclesia Militanti Catalogus*, P. II, XXIII.

⁴⁸ Quoted by Shäfer, 19.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 18 ff.

Essen, Neuenheerse, and Wunsdorf.⁵⁰ In France and Belgium, however, Church authorities were, at this time, concerned with their suppression in favor of the Benedictine order, which endeavor, especially in France, proved detrimental to the institutions of canonesses. This unpopularity of canonical institutions, together with political strife and the distressing conditions brought about by the invasions of the Northmen, effected, especially in western and northern France, an almost complete destruction of the order. In the diocese of Sens and Troyes all the Merovingian foundations were either destroyed or converted into institutions of the Benedictine order. Honnecourt, in the diocese of Cambrai, founded in the seventh century, was occupied in the eleventh only by a few canons. Similar conditions prevailed in the institutions of Hamage, Condé and in Sains-les-Marquion. The canonesses of Marchienne were expelled in the eleventh century and the institution transferred to monks. Denain at the same time was converted into a convent of nuns.⁵¹

The era known as the Saxon period in the history of canonical institutions in Germany extended from the middle of the ninth until the eleventh century. Religious foundations multiplied with marvelous rapidity in the Saxon territories, "for the Saxons were quick in realizing the advantages of a close union between religion and the state, and the most powerful and progressive families of the land vied with each other in founding and endowing religious settlements."⁵² Many of their daughters, besides, entered these institutions and added much to their prosperity and renown. It is indeed remarkable in how great favor the religious life was held by these newly converted peoples. Of the six daughters of Duke Liudolf, which are known, not less than five entered the institution of Gandersheim; Mathilde, daughter of Otto I, was raised in Quedlinburg from her infancy and later became abbess of that institution; Gerberg (d. 955), the famous teacher of Hrotsuit, daughter of Henry, duke of Bavaria, and cousin of abbess Mathilde, ruled the institution of Gandersheim with much renown; another Mathilde (d. 1011), daughter of Prince Liudolf, became abbess of Essen, and her two cousins, Adelheid (d. 1040) and Sophie (d. 1039), daughters of Otto II, were abbesses of Quedlinburg and Gandersheim

⁵⁰ Ibid., 73 f.

⁵¹ Ibid., 4, ff.

⁵² Eckenstein, *Woman under Monasticism*, 145. Cambridge, 1896.

respectively; of the seven daughters of Palsgrave Ezo, six embraced convent life, four of them becoming abbesses of the institutions of Nivelles, Vilich, Essen, and Neuss; of the other two, Sophie probably entered an institution at Mainz and Ida became abbess of Münzenberg, a dependency of Gandersheim.⁵³ Since all these institutions belonged to the canonical order, it shows very clearly that they were held in particular favor by the ruling families of the land; their example was widely emulated by the nobility in general as shown in any list of founders of these institutions.⁵⁴ Among the foundations of canonesses, made during this period, were Gandersheim, Drübeck, Nordhausen, Quedlinburg, Gernrode and Frose, Hadmersleben, Keminade, Wetter in Hessen, the second foundation of Kaufungen, Geseke, Borghorst, Eschwege in Hessen and Rellinghausen."⁵⁵

Outside of the Merovingian-Frankish, the Westphalian and the Saxon periods of foundations, we meet only with isolated instances of new establishments, as, for example, S. Waudru and Maubeuge, apparently organized as institutions of secular canonesses about 950, "Thorn in Limburg founded about 992, Etten on the lower Rhein, founded in the tenth century, St. Maria at Gurk in Austria, St. Stephen at Augsburg, St. Goerici at Epinal and Edelstetten in the Bavarian section of Suabia, in 1126."⁵⁶

All institutions mentioned were at one time or other secular canonesses. Regular canonesses existed, as has been said, in the Belgian territory at an early date, and probably also in various parts of Gaul and Germany.⁵⁷ "In Ireland, St. Patrick instituted canons regular, and St. Bridget was the first of numberless canonesses."⁵⁸ St. Brigid and the virgins in the various communities which she organized have at times been styled Canonesses of St. Augustine, evidently, however, without sufficient reason. That they were canonesses regular might be deduced from the fact that they were probably consecrated virgins,⁵⁹ as St. Brigid was,⁶⁰ and lived under a rule which that saint had compiled for them from the ecclesiastical regulations

⁵³ Ibid., 151 f.

⁵⁴ Cf. Schäfer, 241 f.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 74 f.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 75.

⁵⁷ Bonanni, op. cit., P. II, XXIII.

⁵⁸ Allaria, op. cit., III, 296.

⁵⁹ Cf. Schäfer, 6 f. on the consecration of nuns and canonesses.

⁶⁰ Lanigan, *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, Second Edition, I, 335, Dublin, 1829.

affecting consecrated virgins.⁶¹ That, at times, they have been called Canonesses of St. Augustine evidently rests upon the supposition that the rule of that saint may have formed the basis of the Rule of St. Brigid, for we know that the Rule of St. Augustine was known at an early date in Gaul, and thus may have been known also by St. Patrick and other saints of the so-called First Order. This, however, is a mere conjecture, and as far as is known has not been substantiated by any proofs. Steven, on the authority of Allemande, *Histoire monastique de l'Irlande*, enumerates a large number of early Irish communities under the title of canonesses.⁶² As the old foundations for men are said to have been "exclusively for canons,"⁶³ so we might, probably, with equal reason affirm that the early institutions for women were exclusively of the canonical order.

Similar observations may be made for the canonical institute of women in England. If religious communities of the canonical order existed there before the arrival of the Saxon conquerors, they were swept away, as almost was the very faith of Christ itself. The canonical life was first definitely introduced into England by St. Augustine and the clerics sent by St. Gregory to reconvert the country, for Pope Gregory commanded St. Augustine to establish the canonical order "as a new plantation among the nations entrusted to his care."⁶⁴ In the North, St. Columba and his disciples are said to have introduced the order together with the Gospel of Christ. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the canonical life was also followed early by communities of women, for we generally observe, in the history of monastic foundations, that one began with the other. We hear, indeed, that the first monastic establishments in England were modeled on the seventh century communities of France, where English girls went to be trained in monastic discipline as well as studies.⁶⁵ Most French monasteries of women in the seventh century were organized under the rule of St. Columba.⁶⁶ But even that does not exclude the possibility of the existence of canonical institutions of women in England at an early date.

⁶¹ Ibid., I, note 34, p. 387, 458.

⁶² *Monasticon Hibernicum*, 342 ff. London, 1722.

⁶³ Allaria, op. cit., III, 291.

⁶⁴ Lingard, *The Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, The First American, from the Second London Edition, 49. Philadelphia, 1841; cf. Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, 44. Transl. Giles. London, 1840.

⁶⁵ Torchet, *Histoire de l'Abbaye Royale de Notre Dame de Chelles*, I, 14 f., 48. Paris, 1839.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 47.

On the contrary, we find direct evidence that they existed. The Venerable Bede tells us that when St. Hilda assumed the direction of the monastery called Heortheu (Hartlepool), she "began immediately to reduce all things to a regular system, according as she had been instructed by learned men."⁶⁷ Her chief instructor was St. Aidan, the famous disciple of St. Columba, who is accredited with the introduction of the canonical life in the North. Very likely, therefore, the "regular system" implies the *regula canonica*. "Canonicæ" are mentioned twice in the Penitential of Egbert, archbishop of York,⁶⁸ and the name also occurs in the treatise of Bede, entitled *De Remediis Peccatorum*.⁶⁹ These evidences are very significant, since they obviously prove that the canonical life of sanctimoniales was well established at that time in England, and because they are among the first instances in the Western Church which mention canonical virgins under the name of canonesses.⁷⁰ In England, however, the institute in the earlier centuries of the Middle Ages did not attain the celebrity it acquired in Germany.

The twelfth century, which has been called the golden age of monasticism, constituted a very flourishing period in the history of regular canonesses. The rejection of the canonical rules for men and women by the great Lateran synod of 1059 inaugurated the monastic reform in the canonical order throughout the countries in Europe. In consequence of this legislation many chapters of secular canons renounced their right to personal property and took solemn vows, usually according to the Rule of St. Augustine. Canonesses, with the exception of most institutions in Germany, likewise adopted the reform and became canonesses regular. Those institutions in Germany, and the neighboring French and Belgian territories, which did not submit to the reform relaxed more and more in regular observance. At the same time regular discipline increased proportionately in institutions of regular canonesses. From this period, therefore, dates the definite distinction between canons and canonesses regular and canons and canonesses secular.⁷¹

The twelfth century also witnessed the foundation of a num-

⁶⁷ *Eccles. History*, 242.

⁶⁸ Hadden and Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents of Great Britain and Ireland*, 111, 417, 422. Oxford, 1869; Migne, *Pat. Lat.* LXXXIX, 444, 449.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, XCIV, 569, 572.

⁷⁰ Schäfer, 120 f.

⁷¹ Heimbucher, II, 79 ff.

ber of new religious and canonical orders. Among the former were the strictly monastic orders which branched off from the order of St. Benedict. They included the orders of Cluny, Cîteaux, Chartreuse and Grandmont, of which the latter two developed no corresponding order of women. Of the canonical orders, the Premonstratensian and Augustinian gained the greatest renown. In England alone no fewer than fifty-four houses of regular canons were established, from the Conquest to the death of Henry II. Although the number of houses of canonesses founded in England during the twelfth century is very much smaller, it shows nevertheless a notable increase in canonical institutions of women in that country.⁷² The canonesses regular of St. Augustine, in particular, became very numerous after the twelfth century. Of Premonstratensian canonesses there were, however, only two communities in England, that of Irford in Lincoln, founded by Ralph de Albini, in the reign of Henry II, and that of Brodholm in Nottinghamshire, founded by Agnes de Camville in the latter part of the reign of King Stephen.⁷³

It appears that there were also several communities of regular canonesses organized in connection with the foundations of the order of Knights Hospitallers. This order, founded at Jerusalem about 1092, for the defense, care and maintenance of pilgrims to the Holy Land, included both men and women. The Hospitallers, as well as the Templars, observed the Rule of St. Augustine, and therefore the communities of women were known as Nuns of St. Augustine. The order was introduced into England in 1100. In 1180, all sisterhoods of the order were placed in the convent at Buckland, which became a distinguished house of the order, and a famous educational institution for the daughters of the great neighboring families.⁷⁴

The order of Gilbertines, the only order which took its rise in England, and never extended outside of that country, was founded by Gilbert of Sempringham in 1135. Nearly all foundations were organized as double monasteries, the canons observing the Rule of St. Augustine, supplemented by many statutes

⁷² Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, Vol. IV, London, 1830; Stephen, II; Tanner, *Notitia Monastica*. Cambridge, 1787.

⁷³ Dugdale, VI, Part II, 918, 936; *Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia*, arranged and edited by F. A. Gasquet, I, Pref. VIII; II, 106, 267. London, 1904-06.

⁷⁴ Hugo, *The Mediaeval Nunneries of the County of Somerset and Diocese of Wells*, 2 ff., 101 ff. London. 1867.

drawn from the customs of the Augustinians and Premonstratensians, and the "canonesses"⁷⁵ that of St. Benedict, "following in every way the customs of the canons so far as the weakness of their sex permitted."⁷⁶ St. Gilbert himself founded nine double monasteries. The order was approved by Pope Eugenius III within eleven years of its foundation and numbered in course of time twenty-two double monasteries. At the beginning of the reign of King John (1199-1216), the order counted nine hundred and sixty women and five hundred and ninety-four men.⁷⁷

In Ireland the Augustinian canons and canonesses of Arouasia were especially numerous. This congregation of the order of St. Augustine was founded at Arouaise, in the diocese of Arras, by two priests, Heldemar of Tournay, and Kuno, later cardinal bishop of Praeneste. It spread so rapidly in Ireland that at the time of Innocent III most prelates belonged to it. Already in the twelfth century it numbered from twenty-seven to thirty chapters.⁷⁸ To this organization belonged the canonesses of St. Mary de Hogges, near Dublin, which was founded about 1146 by Dermot, king of Leinster. The humane treatment which the canonesses accorded to the troops of King John, in a plot formed against them by the natives, John rewarded later by rebuilding the monastery and by annexing to it many chapels and livings.⁷⁹ King Dermot also founded the Augustinian communities of canonesses at Athaddy and Kilchlehin in 1151 and subjected both, as cells, to St. Mary de Hogges.⁸⁰ How numerous the communities of Augustinian canons and canonesses were in Ireland is shown by the catalogue of 231 monasteries, which Bishop Thomas de Burga appends to his work entitled *Hibernia Dominicana*, and which he asserts have at one time or other belonged to canons or canonesses regular.

The Premonstratensian canonesses, who claim both St. Norbert and Bl. Rievere of Clastre for their founders, were not only very numerous in France and Germany, but also spread, at an early date, into almost all countries on the continent. Blessed Rievere received the veil from the hands of St. Norbert in 1121.

⁷⁵ Schäfer, 100, note 13.

⁷⁶ Graham, *St. Gilbert of Sempringham and the Gilbertines*, 57, 67. London, 1901.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 40; Heimbucher, 11, 30.

⁷⁸ Heuser, "Canonici regulares". *Kirchenlexikon*, 11, 1832; Heimbucher, 25 f.

⁷⁹ Lanigan, 1V, 185; Archdall, *Monasticon Hibernicum*, 172. London, 1786; Steven, 342.

⁸⁰ Walsh, *The Church of Erin*, 423. New York, 1885; Lanigan, *ut supra*.

At first Ricvere led the life of Martha and Mary, devoting herself with untiring zeal to the care of the sick and the poor in the xenodochium at Premontr , and to the assiduous practice of prayer and meditation. She was soon joined by many daughters of the best families of France and Germany. Among those whom she admitted were "Ermengardis, Countess of Roussi; Agnes, Countess of Braine; Fredisindis, Foundress of Mount St. Martin; Gude, Countess of Bonneburg; Beatrix, Viscountess of Amiens; Anastasia, Duchess of Pomerania. Hadwigis, Countess of Cleves, and Gertrude, her daughter; Adele, of Montmorency, daughter of Bouchard, High Constable of France, and a number of others of equal nobility and virtue."⁸¹ Thus was founded the second order of St. Norbert, which was from its origin a strictly cloistered and contemplative order. The rule which the saint prescribed for the canonesses was severe, yet their life seems to have been very attractive to women at that time, for such was the numerical growth of the order that even during the lifetime of St. Norbert the canonesses in the various countries are said to have numbered ten thousand.⁸² About the middle of the fourteenth century the order had spread throughout Germany, Austria, Hungary, Poland, France, Brabant and Spain; and numbered about four hundred convents. The earlier convents were, at least in part, attached to the institutions of canons who ministered to the spiritual needs of the canonesses; but as early as 1137, three years after the death of St. Norbert, measures were taken in the General Chapter of the order to effect the separation at Premontr ; a final separation of all existing double monasteries of the order was carried out in 1275.⁸³

Besides Premonstratensian canonesses, we find also numerous institutions of Augustinian canonesses in France and Germany. In the diocese of Rouen, for instance, there existed six institutions of regular canonesses under the Rule of St. Augustine.⁸⁴ In France there were, besides, a considerable number of institutions of regular canonesses which followed the Rule of St. Benedict. To this order belonged the chapters of Leigneux⁸⁵ and Alix,⁸⁶ in the diocese of Lyons, and Bouxi res-aux-Dames, in the

⁸¹ Kirkfleet, *History of St. Norbert*, 123. St. Louis, 1916.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 124; Wurm, "Pr monatratenserorden." *Kirchenlexikon*, X, 271.

⁸³ Heimbucher, II, 84.

⁸⁴ Sch fer, 7.

⁸⁵ Ducas, 71.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 7 ff.

diocese of Nancy, which became a chapter of secular canonesses in the twelfth century.⁸⁷ One of the most ancient and most famous chapters of Benedictine canonesses was that of Château-Châlons, founded in 670 in the diocese of Besançon.⁸⁸ For Germany are mentioned as institutions of canonesses, following the Rule of St. Augustine, Quedlinburg, since 1184, Wetter in Hessen, St. Stephen at Strassburg, and St. Stephen at Augsburg. Hohenburg was organized as an institution of regular canonesses under the Rule of St. Augustine in 1156.⁸⁹

Institutions of canonesses, as well as monastic institutions, generally, prospered or declined in a degree corresponding to the observance of regular discipline and the perfection with which they fulfilled the purpose of their foundation. It is an instance where the saying, "History repeats itself," has frequently proved true. A degeneration in the religious spirit of a monastic institution must, therefore, be regarded as a sign of decay, and whatever influences promote its spiritual life and the end of its foundation as means promoting its prosperity and growth.

Influences affecting the life of an institution might, moreover, be internal or external. Considered under the first head, it must be admitted that the prosperity of an institution was determined, in a great measure, by the abilities and qualifications of those charged with its government. Generally, a community which gained special distinction as a religious or educational center was governed by an abbess of superior acquirements. Thus, Ste. Croix at Poitiers attained great prosperity under St. Rade-gund, probably the most remarkable woman of her time,⁹⁰ Chelles under St. Bertile,⁹¹ Whitby under St. Hilda,⁹² Gandersheim under Gerberg,⁹³ Hohenburg under Reglindis and Herrad,⁹⁴ and the convent of the Paraclete under Heloise.⁹⁵ Each of these women was not only remarkable in literary acquirements, but distinguished also for superior qualities of character, administrative ability, and almost without exception for intense devotion to religion.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 32 f.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁸⁹ Schäfer, 10.

⁹⁰ Cf. Montalembert, *The Monks of the West*, I, 487 ff. Boston, 1872.

⁹¹ Torchet, 46.

⁹² Montalembert, II, 262 ff.

⁹³ Eckenstein, 160.

⁹⁴ Wiegand, "Relind." *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, XXVIII, 186; Woltmann, "Herrad," *ibid.*, XII, 206 ff.

⁹⁵ *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, IX, 128; 629 ff.

Of the external influences which contributed most efficaciously to the growth and prosperity of canonical institutions, probably the most powerful was the patronage extended to them by the nobility. We observe, for instance, that by far the greater number of them owed, in the first place, their origin to some aristocratic or royal family.⁹⁶ They provided, besides, for their material prosperity by rich endowments and extended to them a powerful protection against lawless nobles and unscrupulous ecclesiastics.⁹⁷ Noble and royal families furnished also, as we have seen, a large contingent to the membership of these institutions. Frequently the aim of these noble aspirants was not purely religious, which fact, in course of time, conduced to the relaxation of monastic discipline, even of communities noted for their regular observance and excellent religious discipline. A remarkable instance of such influence tending to the deterioration of monastic observance is found in the history of Gandersheim.⁹⁸ If the presence of princely and noble ladies did not always foster the religious spirit in canonical institutions, it contributed generally very much to their temporal prestige and prosperity. Under the patronage of royal and nobles houses a large number of canonical institutions became so-called free abbeys. Very frequently they were exempt not only from episcopal jurisdiction, but even from civil jurisdiction as well; the abbess, generally a daughter of the royalty or the highest nobility of the land, holding the abbey directly "of the king and from the king," under the protection of the Holy See.⁹⁹ In consequence of these close relations existing between canonical institutions and the secular nobility, there arose customs which in their effect proved prejudicial to monastic discipline. It imposed upon such abbeys in particular "the obligation of entertaining the king and his retinue in return for privileges granted to them, and as the king had no fixed place of residence he stayed at his various palaces (palatia) in turn, and usually spent holiday time at one of the religious centres."¹⁰⁰

Another very important feature, which conduced greatly to

⁹⁶ Cf. Schäfer, 238 ff.

⁹⁷ Cf. Eckenstein, 148; Schäfer, 261 ff.; Montalembert, II, 629 ff.

⁹⁸ Cf. Die Lebensbeschreibung Bernwards und Godehards von Hildesheim. *Geschichtsschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XLV, 41 ff.; Agius, *Leben der Abtissin Hathumoda von Gandersheim*. Ibid., XL, 32 ff., 117 ff., 140 ff.

⁹⁹ Cf. Ducas, *Les Chapitres Nobles des Dames*. Paris, 1843; Eckenstein, 152 f.; Bentham, *The History and Antiquities of the Conventual and Cathedral Church of Ely*, 55 f. London, 1812.

¹⁰⁰ Eckenstein, 153.

the prosperity of institutions of canonesses, was the arrangement of double monasteries. Also in this respect, we note that all canonical institutions which acquired a high distinction in literary endeavors and maintained a good religious discipline—with few exceptions¹⁰¹—belonged to this type of monastery. “The vicinity of the monasteries,” says Michelet in his scholarly treatise, *Mémoire sur l'Éducation des Femmes au Moyen Age* “the abuses of which have certainly been exaggerated, created between the brethren and sisters a happy emulation of study as well as of piety. The men tempered their seriousness by sharing in the moral graces of women. They, on their side, took from the austere asceticism of the men a noble flight towards divine things. Both, according to the noble expression of Bossuet, helped each other to climb the rugged path.”¹⁰²

Much credit for the success of a considerable number of institutions, notably the early Anglo-Saxon monasteries, is due to a large number of prelates and monastic legislators, who devoted themselves with singular zeal to the interests of individual institutions and to the advancement of religious life in general. St. Gregory the Great, for instance, took as much interest in the discipline and prosperity of convents of women as in those of men. He provided with fatherly solicitude for the three thousand nuns who had taken refuge at Rome from the ruined monasteries of Italy. His zeal for convents of women was probably greatly stimulated by his family connections with them, for three sisters of his father seem to have been “nuns of some domestic order.” In speaking of them St. Gregory says: “Tres pater meus sorores habuit, quae cunctae tres sacrae virgines fuerunt . . . uno omnes adore conversae, uno eodemque tempore sacratae, sub distractione regulari degentes, in domo propria socialem vitam ducebant.”¹⁰³ There seems to be reason for the supposition that they belonged to some institution organized under the regula canonica.

In England St. Wilfrid rendered lasting service to the monastic order by the introduction of the Benedictine Rule,—which was then established only at Canterbury,—by the charters and exemptions which he secured from Rome, and from the Saxon kings and parliaments, for many of the great monasteries, and

¹⁰¹ Montalembert, II, 696 ff.

¹⁰² Quoted by Montalembert, I, 634.

¹⁰³ Hom. 38, in Evang. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, LXXXVI, 1290 s.

especially "by the strongly woven links of intimate and active association between the numerous monasteries who regarded him as their head."¹⁰⁴ He, in particular, never relaxed in his zeal for the well-being of St. Etheldreda—whose vocation he had so steadily fostered—and her community at Ely. "It was he who instituted her abbess, who gave the veil to her nuns, and who regulated all that concerned the government and interests, temporal or spiritual, of the new community. He paid her frequent visits, and never ceased to give consolation and enlightenment to her for whom he must have felt more than ever responsible."¹⁰⁵ St. Cuthbert (d. 687), likewise, kept up the most friendly relations with the nuns whose numbers and influence rapidly increased among the Anglo-Saxons, and especially in Northumberland. St. Etheldreda, who entertained a great friendship for him, frequently availed herself of his advice while he was prior at Lindisfarne. He took care to visit and instruct Ebba and her nuns at Coldingham and maintained an intimate and constant friendship with Elfeda of Whitby. His last visit was to the monastery of Verca, on which occasion abbess Ethelfrid offered him, as a last token of her spiritual affection, the shroud so frequently mentioned in narratives of his life.¹⁰⁶ The zeal and interest which St. Boniface¹⁰⁷ and St. Aldhelm¹⁰⁸ displayed in their connections with convents of women is well known and will frequently be alluded to in the following pages. Many other names, famous in monastic history, are intimately associated with the foundation and growth of religious institutions of women. It will suffice to recall the names of St. Aidan and his relation with the monastery of Whitby,¹⁰⁹ the interest of St. Romaric in the foundation of Remiremont,¹¹⁰ of St. Gilbert,¹¹¹ of St. Norbert,¹¹² of Robert of Arbrissel,¹¹³ among many others, to appreciate their influence in behalf of monastic institutions of women.

Finally, ecclesiastical legislation, which brought about a reform in many institutions of canonesses in the ninth and eleventh

¹⁰⁴ Montalembert, II, 446.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 372 f.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 473 ff.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Eckenstein, 118 ff.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 112 ff.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. 4, ch. 23.

¹¹⁰ Montalembert, I, 636.

¹¹¹ Cf. Eckenstein, 213 ff.

¹¹² Cf. *Ibid.*, 195.

¹¹³ Cf. *Ibid.*, 193f.

century, contributed greatly to their spiritual, and incidentally, also their material prosperity. It accounted, no doubt, to a great extent for the remarkable intellectual activity which we observe in a number of canonical institutions, in which the reform was carried out most extensively. In the institution of Hohenburg, for example, a period of great intellectual activity followed the introduction of the reform by the famous abbess Reglindis.¹¹⁴ It contributed in particular to the rapid increase and prosperous religious life of the various kinds of regular canonesses. It has been shown with what marvelous rapidity the number of Premonstratensian canonesses increased; similarly, the Augustinian canonesses multiplied rapidly after the promulgation of the reform.¹¹⁵

In noting the various observances of individual institutions, it is often difficult and almost impossible to distinguish clearly whether they are to be ranked as regular or secular institutions. At times the obligations of regular canonesses were so extensively modified by special statutes and customs that, although organized under a regular religious rule, very frequently that of St. Benedict, they hardly differed in their mode of life from secular canonesses. Thus, for instance, the canonesses of Notre-Dame d' Avesnes, while organized under the Rule of St. Benedict, lived from the beginning rather as secular canonesses than as religious or regular canonesses; they inherited and disposed of private property and did not at all observe the common life.¹¹⁶ So also in the Benedictine convent at Geisenfeld, established about 830, existed a number of observances which are distinctly characteristic of canonical institutions; the sanctimoniales possessed their own prebends and private property; their church was at the same time a parish church—which was regularly the case in institutions of canonesses¹¹⁷—and canons were charged with the pastoral functions of the church.¹¹⁸ Similar deviations from the ordinary observances of the regular religious life are found in numerous other instances.

Most institutions of regular canonesses were founded simultaneously with the corresponding establishments of canons. The

¹¹⁴ Cf. Eckenstein, 238 ff.; "Rilindis et Herradis Hohenburgensis Abbatissae-Notitia et Fragmenta." Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXCLV, 1537 ss.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Heimbucher, 11, 81 ff.

¹¹⁸ Ducas, 14.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Schäfer, 76 ff.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

canonesses of the Lateran have evidently been founded in connection with the canons of that order. Many claim that Pope Gelasius prescribed for them the observance of the Rule of St. Augustine as early as 440.¹¹⁹ The canonesses regular of the Holy Sepulchre were founded in Jerusalem, under the pious Prince Godfrey, in connection with the canons of that name. The congregation extended later into Spain, Germany, France and other European countries.¹²⁰ The canonesses of the Holy Cross at Coimbra in Portugal corresponded to the congregation of canons of the Holy Cross, founded in 1132 by Tellon, archdeacon of the cathedral at Coimbra.¹²¹ The canonesses of the Holy Ghost, whose duties and dress resembled that of the canons of the Holy Ghost, founded at Montpellier towards the end of the twelfth century, were especially numerous in Italy and France, but they also possessed houses in Germany, Poland and Spain. Their chief duty was the care of the sick, and in particular the care of sick children, especially foundlings.¹²² The canonesses of St. Victor, corresponding to the canons of that name, owned several convents in Flanders.¹²³ If we add to these various congregations of regular canonesses, those of the congregation of Aroasia, the canonesses secular, so widely established in the latter part of the early Middle Ages, and the numerous canonesses established under the Rules of St. Benedict and St. Augustine, it will be evident how considerable a part of the monastic order at large canonesses formed prior to the thirteenth century.

If canonesses varied greatly according to the congregations and orders to which they belonged, they varied even more as to the extent of monastic observance and discipline. In this respect there was no uniformity even among the institutions established under the same rule. It must be observed, that what has been said of the monastic order at large, during the early Middle Ages, is true in particular of institutions of canonesses—each developed its own monastic observances, each adhered to its peculiar statutes, customs and privileges, which modified so extensively the rules, under which the institution was originally

¹¹⁹ Bonanni, *op. cit.*, pars sec. XXIV; Heuser, "Canonissae," *op. cit.*, II, 1844; Hélyot, *op. cit.*, II, 61.

¹²⁰ Bonanni, *ut supra*, XXXI; Hélyot, II, 124 f.

¹²¹ Heuser, "Canonici Regulares" *op. cit.*, 1832; *Ibid.*, "Canonissae," *ut supra*.

¹²² *Ut supra*, 1844; Heimbucher, II, 82 f.

¹²³ Heimbucher, *loc. cit.*

established, that the variety of observances was almost as great as the number of institutions themselves.¹²⁴

A tabulated list of typical institutions of canonesses has been added at the end of this chapter to illustrate some of the main features which characterized these institutions.

It has been observed, and probably very correctly, that the title "Benedictine," or that of another order, does not always prove that the institution belonged to that order.¹²⁵ While the name may be indicative that some institutions at one time or other observed the Benedictine rule and discipline, their canonical character is evidently proved by the observances and privileges which are recorded for them.

As in monasteries of men, so also in those of women, monastic discipline declined under the stress of degenerating influences. Already towards the close of the fifth century we observe a notable decrease in the enthusiasm which characterized the first ages of monastic life in the West. "Except in Ireland and Gaul, where in most of the provinces some new foundations rose, a general interruption was observable in the extension of the institution."¹²⁶ Evidently, the final triumph of the barbarian invasions effected—besides the destruction they had wrought in monastic life and property—also a decrease in the zeal and enthusiasm for the monastic order. However, with conditions somewhat stabilized, and under the energetic impulse furnished by the inspiration of the Benedictine institute, new life and vigor came to be infused into the monastic order. From the latter part of the sixth, during the seventh and earlier part of the eighth century monasticism flourished very widely throughout the Western Church.

From the latter half of the eighth century, and even somewhat earlier, extensive evidence proves the decline of monastic discipline, both in institutions of the monastic and of the canonical order. The liberality and munificence of Merovingian and Anglo-Saxon rulers towards the monastic institute, shown in their lavish grants of privileges, exemptions and rich endowments, had conduced greatly to the temporal prosperity of monasteries. But this rapid increase in wealth and influence contributed very effectually also to laxity in the observance of

¹²⁴ Cf. Besse, *op. cit.*, LXXI, 406; Bentham, 54.

¹²⁵ Schäfer 20.

¹²⁶ Montalembert, I, 303.

the rule. Besides, these valuable privileges offered a powerful inducement to the propagation of "lay monasteries,"¹²⁷ an evil which brought much discredit on the monastic order and terminated only with the Danish invasions.

Relaxation, in fact, had so far progressed in Anglo-Saxon monasteries as to evoke the severe censures, not only of the Venerable Bede, who witnessed its progress,¹²⁸ but also of the intrepid Boniface, in distant Germany, who did not relax in his interest for the welfare of the Church in his native land.¹²⁹ In consequence of these remonstrances, "and especially because of the severe orders of Pope Zacharias," the second council of Cloveshove, "the most important of the Anglo-Saxon assemblies of the eighth century," was convened for the repression of abuses. In accordance with the advice of St. Boniface, monks, and especially nuns were forbidden "to make any change in their dress, shoes, or headdress, which would assimilate their costume to that of lay members of society," and "to frequent the houses of secular persons, or to dwell in them; it commanded the abbots and abbesses to neglect no means of preserving in their communities, and the schools attached to them, the love of study and reading, as the best preservative against the vanities and lusts of the world, and to make their monasteries an asylum for silence, study, prayer and work; it reproved and forbade the introduction of poets, minstrels, musicians and clowns into religious houses: the prolonged visits of secular persons, who were allowed to penetrate into and wander about the interior of the cloister; the prolonged and luxurious meals mingled with buffooneries; and especially that fatal leaning towards drunkenness, which led them not only themselves to drink to excess, but to force their lay companions to drink with them."¹³⁰ How far the reform contemplated by the prelates assembled in this council was carried into effect seems impossible to ascertain. The enactments, at least, which aimed to improve conditions in "lay monasteries" proved ineffectual; for we know that the disturbances and abuses arising through them continued to the end of the Anglo-Saxon period.

On the continent, particularly in Gaul, early ecclesiastical

¹²⁷ Cf. Lingard, 89 f.

¹²⁸ Cf. Montalembert, II, 560 ff.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 635.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 636; for the original see canons 4, 7, 20 and 29 in Hadden and Stubbs, *Councils and Eccl. Documents*, III, 364 ff.

legislation endeavored to maintain the observance of monastic discipline according to the spirit of the canons enacted by the general council of Chalcedon in 451.¹³¹ In consequence monasteries remained more directly under the supervision of the bishops—although we find also here many exemptions from episcopal jurisdiction recorded; probably for that reason they did not, in general, deviate as far from the observance of regular discipline. Significant from the viewpoint of exemptions accorded to canonical institutions at this early date, is canon fourteen of the Concilium Latunense (673–675). It confirms in every respect the privileges which in course of time had been acquired by institutions organized under the regulations of the Fathers.¹³² However, towards the end of the eighth century monastic observance in convents of women evidently required reform; for the forty-seventh canon of the synod of Frankfurt in 794 ordained that the conduct of abbesses, who did not live canonically and regularly should be reported to the king, that they might be deposed from their office.¹³³ Furthermore, in the assembly of orders held at Aachen in 802, the bishops evidently had as much reason to inquire into the monastic observance of nuns and canonesses as they had to examine that of monks and canons; and it is noteworthy that also in their case the bishops made a distinction between the observance of the Rule of St. Benedict and that based on the canons of the Church.¹³⁴ So also the synods of Mainz¹³⁵ and Châlons sur Saône¹³⁶ occupied themselves with regulations for sanctimoniales living either according to the Rule of St. Benedict or according to the regulations of the canons.

The first definite reform of the canonical institute of women dates, however, from the synod of Aachen in 816 (or 817). From the ninth canon of the synod held at Aschheim, between 748 and 763, it appears that some convents of women had adopted the rule which St. Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, had compiled for clerics living in community. This rule continued to be observed, even after the council of Aachen, in convents of nuns.¹³⁷ As a result of the reform contemplated by Louis the

¹³¹ Cf. Montalembert, 1, 452.

¹³² "Privilegia vero, que antiquitus vel moderno tempore monasteriis iuxta sanctorum patrum regulas viventibus indulta sunt, ut propria vivant firmitate, per praesentem institutionem modis omnibus sanximus." *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Leg. 111, Conc. 1, 218.

¹³³ Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte*, 111, 692.

¹³⁴ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Leg. 1, fol. 100.

¹³⁵ Hefele, 111, 761.

¹³⁶ Mansi, *Coll. Con.*, XIV, 105.

¹³⁷ Heimbucher, 1, 389 f.

Pious for the monastic order at large, also the institutes of canonesses were placed on a more regular basis. Amalarius of Metz (d. 857) compiled, for the better organization of canons, a collection of regulations drawn from the old canons and writings of the Fathers, which is known as the *De institutione canonicorum*, and for the benefit of canonesses a similar collection, entitled *De institutione sanctimonialium*. These statutes, embracing twenty-eight chapters, were henceforth to be the fixed rule for religious women known as canonesses.¹³⁸

While the reform thus promulgated among institutions of canonesses evidently effected a temporary reform, there were in the provisions of the rule itself the germs of a far-reaching deterioration in the order. The canonesses were allowed the right to dispose of their private property and to have the attendance of servants. The former indulgence, especially, led early to a disregard for the common life, so strictly enjoined by the rule of canonesses. Relaxation, in fact, progressed so rapidly that the Lateran synod of 1059 rejected both the rule of canons and that of canonesses, as unfit to promote the ideals of the religious life and enjoined the regular observance of a strictly monastic order.¹³⁹

The legislation of this synod inaugurated the second, widely spread reform of the institutions of canonesses. Many communities, following the example set by the canons, took the regular vows of religion according to the Rule of St. Augustine, becoming thereby regular canonesses of that order. The reform continued to spread during the twelfth century in consequence of successive legislation to enforce the enactments of the Lateran Synod in the previous century. Thus the synod of Rheims held under Eugene III, in 1148, not only speaks disparagingly of the life of canonesses, but also ordained the execution of the reform under ecclesiastical penalties. Canon four of this synod enjoins that the canonesses living under the Rule of St. Benedict or St. Augustine should correct the irregularities incompatible with the religious life.¹⁴⁰ Similar injunctions, tending to estab-

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 5, 78.

¹³⁹ Cf. Heimbucher, II, 79 f.

¹⁴⁰ "Ut sanctimoniales et mulieres, quae canonicae nominantur et irregulariter vivunt, iuxta bb. Benedicti et Augustini rationem vitam suam in melius corrigant et emendent, superfluitatem et inhonestatem vestium recidant et in claustro sint assidue permanentes, choro, refectorio et dormitorio sint contentae et relictis praebendis et aliis propriis earum necessitatibus de communi provideant. Quodsi usque ad proximum apostolorum festum non adimpleverint, divina prohibemus officia celebrari; et si qua ipsarum mortua fuerit, Christianorum careat sepultura." Mansi, *Coll. Con.*, XXI, 714 s.

lish the reform, were passed by many other synods, especially the two synods held at London in 1127¹⁴¹ and 1138,¹⁴² that of Rheims, in 1157,¹⁴³ and that of the Lateran, in 1139.¹⁴⁴ From the eleventh and twelfth centuries, therefore, regular monastic observance came to be established in most institutions of canonesses, except in the greater number of German institutions, and in some of the neighboring French and Belgian territories, where the reform was perseveringly resisted. In these institutions secularization progressed steadily; in fact, at the time of the Reformation, many of them, in Germany, readily adopted the new creed and became Protestant institutions.¹⁴⁵

In concluding this brief historical survey, it seems important to point out the epochs which have during the course of study naturally suggested themselves as a suitable division of time for the period treated, and which, in general, have been adhered to in this dissertation. The first period in the history of canonical institutions is very decidedly the age of the Fathers of the Church. During this era, the canonical life of widows and virgins developed its peculiarly ecclesiastical character which distinguished them from widows and virgins who led a regular monastic life. During this period also the canonical life of women, generally directed by the counsels and exhortations of the Fathers, and regulated by the canons of councils and synods, was first definitely legislated for by the Rule which St. Augustine compiled for the community of virgins at Hippo. Educationally, it is important for having furnished the basic principles which governed feminine education throughout the Middle Ages.

The second, or Merovingian period, ordinarily looked upon as an age of violence and confusion, constitutes, nevertheless, a very flourishing time of monasticism in ancient Gaul, Ireland and Anglo-Saxon England. It is the period during which the Benedictine Rule gained the ascendancy over the religious rules on the continent and came to be firmly established in England. In the history of education it is the period of Irish eminence in learning, the influence of which spread widely in England, France and Germany. Although it is an established fact that the canonical order of women continued to exist during this period, we

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 358.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 513.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 845.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 528, 532 s.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Heimbucher, II, 80 f.; Heuser, "*Canonissae*," *op. cit.*, II, 842 ff.

have, because of the scarcity of records, very little evidence of its progress and development as a monastic institution. It constitutes, therefore, the epoch least known in the history of canonesses.

The Carolingian period, and especially the reigns of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, was, as has been shown, a period of reform in the canonical as well as in the monastic order at large. The latter half of the ninth, and the tenth century, which, broadly speaking, may be designated as the age of the Ottos, formed a most prosperous period in the history of canonesses in Germany. While in France, in England and Ireland the Danish invasions proved most disastrous to monastic life and property, there the strong rule of the Saxon house and its interest in monastic institutions greatly promoted their increase and progress.

From the middle of the eleventh to the end of the twelfth century dates, finally, the second and greater period of reform, which brought about a clear distinction between regular and secular canonesses. It is also the period which witnessed a large increase in canonical institutions through the establishment of new orders and congregations under the Rule of St. Augustine.

TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS OF CANONESSES

| Name | Location | Date of Foundation | Founders | Order | Observances | Privileges | References |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|
| Andlau..... | D. Strassburg.. | c. 887 | Empress Richardis.. | St. Benedict, originally. | Lived in community, no vows. | Exempted from episcopal jurisdiction; abbess, princess of the empire. | Ducas, II. |
| Avennay..... | D. Arras..... | a. 1125 | Clemence de Bourgogne. | St. Benedict. | No common life, private property. | Exempted from episcopal jurisdiction; feudal rights. | Ducas, 13 f. |
| Château-Châlons.. | D. Besançon... | c. 670 | Norbert Patrice, a nobleman. | St. Benedict. | Ordinary vows of religion. | Abbess, princess of the empire. | Ducas, 37. |
| Cologne, S. Maria. | Germany..... | c. 689 | Queen Plectrudis... | St. Benedict. | Private residence, common refectory, private property. | | Hélyot, VI, 424 ff. |
| Denain..... | D. Arras..... | c. 764 | Aldebert d' Ostrevant. | St. Benedict. | No vows..... | Canonesses styled "Countesses of Ostrevant." | Ducas, 44. |
| Essen..... | Germany..... | c. 852 | Bp. Altfried..... | Secular..... | No common life, servants, private property. | | Schäfer, 74, 88, 192. |
| Estrun..... | D. Arras..... | c. 800 | Princess Beatrix.... | St. Benedict. | Three vows, no cloister. | Privileges confirmed by Paschal II. | Ducas, 61. |
| Gandersheim..... | D. Hildesheim. | c. 852 | Duke Liudolf..... | St. Benedict. | Regular monastic discipline, secularized in 11th century. | Extensive feudal possessions; abbess, princess of the empire. | Hélyot, VI, 440 ff. |
| Herford..... | Westphalia.... | 822 | Louis the German.. | St. Benedict. | Common refectory and dormitory. | Abbess, princess of the empire and represented at diets. | Hélyot, VI, 445. |
| Hohenburg..... | Alsace | a. 800 | Duke Ethico..... | St. Benedict, originally. | Reformed 1140-1141 under the Rule of St. Augustine. | Abbess, princess of the empire. | Kirchenlexikon, VI, 162. |

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--|--|------------------------|
| Kaufungen..... | Hessen..... | c. 850 | Counts of Billung... | St. Benedict. | Private residence, servants. | | Schäfer, 72, 200, 202. |
| Lons-le-Saulnier... | D. Besançon... | a. 1253 | | St. Clare.... | Three vows, private residence, servants. | Exemptions approved by the Holy See. | Ducas, 73. |
| Mauberge..... | Belgium..... | a. 683 | St. Aldegonde..... | St. Augustine | | Governed city and its territory. | Hélyot, VI, 436. |
| Montfleuri..... | D. Grenoble... | 1342 | Humbert II..... | St. Augustine | Regular vows, constitutions of St. Dominic. | | Ducas, 94. |
| Ottmarsheim..... | D. Bale..... | 11th cent. | Count Rudolph... | St. Benedict, originally. | Three vows, common life. | Exempted from episcopal jurisdiction; canonesses styled, "Baronesses." | Ducas, 104. |
| Quedlinburg..... | Anhalt..... | c. 930 | Henry the Fowler... | Secular..... | No vows, common refectory and dormitory. | Abbess, princess of the empire, right of striking coin. | Hélyot, VI, 445 f. |
| Regensburg..... (Obermünster) | Germany..... | 9th cent. | Empress Emma.... | St. Benedict. | Reformed in 974 by Bishop Wolfgang. | Institution under imperial protection. | Hélyot, VI, 429. |
| Remiremont..... | Lorraine..... | 620 | Romarie, a nobleman. | St. Benedict, at times. | Prebends since 1113, private residence. | | Hélyot, VI, 402, ff. |
| St. Waudru..... | Belgium..... | a. 658 | St. Waudru..... | St. Augustine | Private residence, counts of Hainaut secular abbots. | Abbess invested counts with abbey and earldom. | Hélyot, VI, 445 f. |

For date of foundation, cf. Schäfer, pp. 70-76; for founders, *ibid.*, pp. 238-342; for order, pp. 11-24; for observance, *ibid.*, pp. 191-210; for Gandersheim, cf. *Leben der Aebtissin Hathumod in Geschichtsschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit* XLV, 41 f., and Braummüller, "Gandersheim," in *Kirchenlexikon*, V, 87; cf. also Eckenstein, 152 f.

CHAPTER II

THE CANONESSES AS AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

1. *Characteristic Features of the Canonical Life*

Among the more important features of canonical communities we note, in general, the want of the cloister. Enclosure, strictly considered, formed never an essential characteristic of canonical institutions, excepting some of the later "regular" institutions of canonesses, the Premonstratensian for example, who were in all respects strictly observant, monastic institutions. It will be remembered that the early Christian virgins lived either in communities or privately with their relatives. For the latter a life of perfect seclusion was evidently impossible. They had to be satisfied to lead a retired life as far as circumstances permitted. All, however, the virgins organized in communities, and individual sanctimoniales, were constantly admonished to withdraw from intercourse with the world as far as possible, since a secluded manner of life has always been considered most conducive to a life of perfection. This teaching is evident not only in the exhortations that the Fathers of the Church addressed to the Christian virgins, but is definitely stated by the great Origen, who did not hesitate to declare that it was an essential requisite to a life of sanctity.¹ It may therefore be concluded that separation from the world was constantly aimed at, although a strict cloister was not enforced at this early period; in other words, it was an accessory, not an essential feature.

Monastic communities of virgins multiplied rapidly, both in the East and West from about the middle of the fourth century onward, and while they drew their members chiefly from the ranks of the sanctimoniales, leading individually a retired life, they did not, however, totally absorb them. Theodoret, the historian, tells us in his *Historia Religiosa* that there were virgins leading a private, retired life, but that very many lived in com-

¹ In Levit., hom. XI. Migne, *Pat. Gr.*, XII, 529 ss.

munities. He says: "Multae siquidem aliae, partim solitariam vitam sunt amplexae, partim versari cum pluribus maluerunt . . . ita ut ducentae et quinquaginta, aut eo plures paucioresque una degent, uno cibo vescentes, super storeis solis dormire solitae, et manus quidem lanificio addicentes, linguam vero hymnis consecrantes."² This statement of the historian would seem to indicate that community life was the ordinary mode of life of the sanctimoniales in the East about the middle of the fifth century, at which time Theodoret wrote his *Historia Religiosa*.

That it was the custom also in the Western Church is clear from numerous instances found in the writings of historians and scholars, and particularly from the enactments of the early councils, synods and capitularies.³ Some sanctimoniales appear to have lived under very singular circumstances. We are told, for example, by St. Gregory of Tours, that Ingoberga, queen of King Charibert, had in her service the daughter of a certain poor man "who wore the robe of a nun."⁴ From a letter of Alcuin to "Hundradae monachae" we learn incidentally what influence their conduct was expected to exercise on their immediate surroundings. Hundrada lived at the court of Offa, king of the Mercians. Having admonished her to set the example of good works and a virtuous life at the court of the king, he adds the reason for doing so: "ut adolescentiores erudiantur, seniores congaudeant, omnes ædificentur; ut in palatio regis regularis vitae devotio in tua videatur conversatione."⁵ Their duty, therefore, extended beyond their own personal sanctification; it was incumbent on them to edify, instruct and lead to the practice of a virtuous life the members of the household in which they lived.

How far intercourse with the world obtained in the communities of the early Christian virgins may, perhaps, be best seen from several instances of which we are informed. It is evident from the life of St. Macrina that ladies of the world spent, at times, intervals of time in the convent of St. Macrina's virgins, for the purpose of advancement in virtue. This was also the custom in the convents of the monks of St. Basil.⁶ A particular lady mentioned is Vestiana, a young widow, who "chose the great Macrina as protector and guardian of her widowhood,

² Ibid., *Pat. Gr.* LXXXII, 1494.

³ Cf. Schäfer, 34 f.

⁴ *History of the Franks*, trans. by E. Brehaut, p. 87. New York, 1916.

⁵ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Ep. IV, 105.

⁶ Heimbucher, I, 124.

and spent her time mostly with the virgins, learning from them the life of virtue."⁷ It is an instance from which we obtain, besides, knowledge of a certain kind of educational influence exercised by the early Christian virgins. It is corroborated by the narrative of the miraculous cure of a child effected by St. Macrina, on which occasion the parents of the child enjoyed not only the material hospitality of the community but were also entertained with the "riches of philosophy."⁸ St. Marcella's community on the Aventine admitted Roman maidens and widows to the spiritual exercises of the community as well as to the instructions and discussions of scriptural topics. Among them were St. Marcellina, sister of St. Ambrose, St. Paula, a "vidua professa" and her daughter Eustochium, none of whom was a member of the community. When St. Jerome began his course of lectures on the Holy Scripture at the earnest entreaties of St. Marcella and the intervention of Pope Damasus, the "virgins who lived in their own houses in the city crowded to hear his lessons."⁹ The same point is further illustrated by a well-known instance of a later date, found in the life of Gregory, Abbot of Utrecht. St. Boniface in the course of his apostolic labors happened to enjoy on one occasion the hospitality of Adela, daughter of King Dagobert, and abbess of Pfalzel, a canonical institution near Trier. It is narrated that on this occasion the saint not only dined with the abbess and virgins in the common refectory but delivered an eloquent discourse on the text of Holy Writ, read according to the custom of the community. The reader on that day happened to be Gregory, a nephew of the abbess. So impressed was the talented young boy that no perswasion could separate him henceforth from so learned a master.¹⁰

It seems important to state here briefly what was the general attitude of the Church concerning the cloister of sanctimoniales, before proceeding to the discussion of the topic in regard to the institutions of canonesses properly so called. This information is obtained chiefly from the writings of the Fathers on the subject of virginity. Their teaching formed the basis on which

⁷ Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of St. Macrina*, 61. Transl. W. K. Lowthian Clarke. London, 1916.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁹ Campbell, J. A., "Virgins consecrated to God in Rome during the first centuries." *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, XXV, 781, 784.

¹⁰ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr. XV, 67 f.

later monastic discipline developed; for monastic rules generally, and we may say those of canonesses in particular, drew to a great extent their substance from the writings of the Fathers. It may be interesting to note that the rule for canonesses,¹¹ promulgated by the Synod of Aachen in 816 or, according to others, in 817, forms the introduction and the first six chapters entirely from excerpts of the writings of the Fathers and recalls frequently, in the twenty-two remaining chapters, the teaching of the Fathers on the subjects legislated. For this reason a summary of the teaching of the Fathers on the life of retirement to be led by the early Christian virgin is inserted here.

We observe in the first place that all the Fathers are unanimous in their teaching that unnecessary intercourse with the world should be avoided, since the Christian virgin could derive from it no benefit; suffering, frequently, rather harm in consequence of the worldly and useless talk liable to be indulged in on such occasions.¹² For this reason the company of married people and of such as are imbued with the spirit of the world ought to be particularly avoided. Her companions are to be grave and serious women, especially widows and virgins of approved conduct.¹³ The Christian virgin should appear rarely in public, and only when necessity requires it;¹⁴ and then not without her mother or at least a companion advanced in years and of exemplary conduct.¹⁵ On all occasions she ought to take great care that her conduct be edifying. Modesty and gravity ought to distinguish the Christian virgin in her manners.¹⁶ Her appearance even should suffice to raise the hearts of men to God;¹⁷ for so great ought to be plenitude of virtue in her "that it may flow out from the mind to the garb, and burst out from the conscience to the outward appearance."¹⁸

These were the chief principles intended to guide the Chris-

¹¹ *Regula Sanctimonialium* ab Amalario collecta. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 935 s.

¹² S. Ambros, *Exhortatio Virginitatis*. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XVI, 357.

¹³ "Matronarum maritis ac saeculo servientium, tibi consortia declinentur, ne sollicitetur animus, et audias, quid vel maritus uxori, vel uxor locuta sit viro. Venenatae sunt hujuscemodi confabulationes . . . Graves feminae, et maxime viduae, ac virgines, tibi comites eligantur: quarum probata est conversatio, sermo moderatus, sancta verecundia." S. Hieron. *Ep. CXXX. Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 1121.

¹⁴ "Rarus sit egressus in publicum. Martyres tibi quaerentur in cubiculo tuo. Nunquam causa deerit procedendi, si semper quando necesse est, processura sis." Id., *Ep. XXII. Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 404.

¹⁵ "Quae vivunt in monasterio, et quarum simul magnus est numerus, nunquam solae nunquam sine matre procedent." Loc. cit.; also *Ep. CXXX. Ibid.*, 1122.

¹⁶ "Virginem mihi prius gravitas sua nuntiet, pudore obvio, gradu sobrio, vultu modesto; et praenuntia integritatis anteant signa virtutis." S. Ambros. *De virginibus. Pat. Lat.*, XVI, 223.

¹⁷ S. Basil., *De virginit.*, *Pat. Gr.*, XXX, 715.

¹⁸ Tertull., *De cultu foeminarum. Pat. Lat.*, I, 1332.

tian virgin in her contact with the world; they represent the ideals on which she was to regulate her conduct. In actual practice, however, there must have been many shortcomings, for St. Cyprian finds many and grave faults to correct,¹⁹ and St. Jerome points out many irregularities existing among Christian virgins in his letter to Demetrias.²⁰ Yet, they give an idea of what the conduct of sanctimoniales was generally supposed to be, and of the moral influence they must have exercised in the communities in which they lived. In spite of human frailties they evidently spread "the good odor of Jesus Christ," and, according to the proverb, "Verba docent, exempla trahunt," exercised a teaching function of the noblest kind.

How far, it may be asked now, have the customs and regulations enjoining retirement, and yet permitting a moderate intercourse with the world to the "canonical virgins," been preserved or amended in the institutions of canonesses? We might, perhaps, best answer this question by noting in the first place the prescriptions of the rules of canonesses on this point, and secondly show by a comparative survey what the actual practice was in individual institutions.

The rules observed by canonesses might be any of the existing monastic rules adapted to the exigencies of the canonical life, as has been shown in the preceding chapter. Very frequently it was the Rule of St. Benedict, modified by special statutes and customs, that was observed; very often also—and very probably oftener than is generally admitted—the Augustinian Rule was followed in the institutions of canonesses regular, while that compiled by Amalarius of Metz, and approved by the synod of Aachen, became the recognized rule for canonesses secular. The Rule of St. Augustine besides, varied, extensively in the strictness of monastic discipline in the different congregations of regular canonesses; for, although the essential regulations were drawn from the rules St. Augustine gave to the moniales of Hippo, ²¹ in "no case did it stand alone as the actual rule of life, but it was always supplemented, if not by formal statutes, at least by observances and customs. It was these, and not the Rule, which proved the determining conditions of life and work.

¹⁹ De habitu virginum. *Pat. Lat.*, IV, 340 ss.

²⁰ Ep. CXXX. *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 1107 ss.

²¹ Ep. CCXI. *Pat. Lat.*, XXXIII, 958 ss.

Every shade of severity could be found among the Austin congregations."²²

Originally, the Rule of St. Augustine did not differ from the general teaching of the Fathers on the necessity of withdrawal from the world for virgins professing the *vita canonica*. It is evident from the text that the *sanctimoniales* assisted at the Divine services in the parish church, that they were allowed to go to the baths, or any other place required by duty or necessity, but they had to be accompanied by at least two companions who were to be appointed by the superior. They were likewise admonished to act with prudence and reserve in public and to practise virginal modesty on all occasions.²³

This is in substance all that the Augustinian Rule prescribed on the subject of the cloister. As in other points, so also in this, we find the rule characterized by a truly paternal condescension, making generous allowance for human needs and yet enjoining obligations essential to the perfection of the religious life. The Augustinian Rule, as has been said, varied greatly, however, in the various religious institutions that adopted it. As regular canonesses were in all respects true religious, they were bound in particular to the strict observance of the cloister. The Premonstratensian canonesses, for example, "might never leave the cloister, and they cut themselves off entirely from all commerce with the world. They were not permitted to speak, even to their nearest relatives, except through a grating and then always in the presence of two other religious."²⁴ This rigid seclusion did not, however, prevent the canonesses from undertaking the education of girls, for we know that several institutions of the order gained distinction as educational centers, as, for instance, Doxan in Bohemia, "where queens and princesses received their education."²⁵

The Gilbertines, also canonesses of St. Augustine,²⁶ observed the cloister strictly. "Their communications with the outer world were carried on by lay sisters, who assisted the choir nuns with the rough work and carried on such outside intercourse as was indispensable."²⁷ However, the Gilbertine canon-

²² Tout, *Historical Essays*, "The Rule of St. Augustine," 70. New York, 1902.

²³ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXXIII, 961 ss.

²⁴ Kirkfleet, *History of St. Norbert*, 124. St. Louis, 1916.

²⁵ Heimbucher, II, 84.

²⁶ Schäfer, 100.

²⁷ Floyd, "An Extinct Religious Order and Its Founder." *The Catholic World*, LXIII, 349.

esses undertook the education of girls; for St. Aelred, Abbot of Rievaulx "gives us an unpleasant story of a girl at Watton Priory who had been sent there to be brought up by the nuns,"²⁸ and Pope Honorius III found it necessary to forbid (1223) the canonesses to undertake the education of girls. "No young girl or woman, who did not intend to become a nun," was to be "nurtured or taught in the convents of their Order."²⁹

The strict observance of the cloister by the regular canonesses did, therefore, not prevent their being occupied with the training of girls. We are warranted to conclude, however, that conditions in these institutions could not have been, on the whole, as favorable to public education as in the institutions of secular canonesses, where the cloister was less strictly enjoined and in course of time discarded altogether.

The rule of canonesses adopted by the synod of Aachen permits communication with the outside, but it is to be restricted to necessary intercourse. Conversations with men must take place in presence of three or four sanctimoniales of commendable life, and they are to be appointed by the abbess. They must conduct themselves with particular modesty and reserve on these occasions. Since the canonesses are allowed maids for their personal service, they must exercise great discretion in choosing such that will not disturb the minds of their mistress with news of the world.³⁰ As long as the canonesses secular adhered to the regulations of the synod of Aachen the religious character of their life was sufficiently safeguarded. In course of time, however, one or the other observance was gradually dropped and finally also the cloister.³¹

Among the irregularities prevalent in the later institutions of secular canonesses that of disregard for the cloister contributed perhaps more than any other to the worldly character described by Cardinal James Vitry in the thirty-first chapter of his *Historia Occidentalis*. We observe that a custom of regular vacations, which the canonesses spent with their relatives, was introduced at an early date. Apparently, in some instances, the poverty of the institution furnished a pretext for this indulgence, at least this was the case at St. Ursula in Cologne. A

²⁸ *Cath. Encyclopedia*, Butler, R. U. "Gilbertines."

²⁹ Graham, 123.

³⁰ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 963 s.

³¹ Heimbucher, II, 80.

deed of Archbishop Wichfried, dated 931, by which some property is conferred on this institution, states expressly that the income derived from it is to supply the needs of the community, which necessitated the frequent absences of the canonesses from the institution. Later, in the twelfth century, the same canonesses are granted a vacation of ten weeks by the Archbishop.³²

The length of these leaves of absence from the community varied greatly in different institutions. In Gerresheim, for example, the canonesses were permitted to spend two months every year with their relatives and acquaintances, while in Thorn (Belgium) custom allowed only six weeks. In Dietkirchen (Bonn) they might be absent from eight to ten weeks and besides spend the entire fourth year with their relatives. In Herdecke they received a leave of six weeks the first year, of three months the second and six months the third. In Kaufungen existed the peculiar custom which obliged the abbess to furnish a conveyance, horses and a servant to the canonesses who wished to visit their friends and relatives.³³ The canonesses of Maubeuge are known to have carried even portable altars along on their journeys.³⁴

Whether these lengthy sojourns of canonesses with their relatives exercised any direct educational influence outside their institutions is impossible to ascertain. Since the canonesses themselves received generally a considerable education before they were admitted as members into the institution, it seems very probable, that they took advantage of their vacations to teach the children of their relatives the rudiments of knowledge; perhaps, they took also some of the girls along with them to attend the schools of the canonesses. The latter supposition seems substantiated by the fact that there existed, at least at a later date, provisions in many institutions permitting the canonesses to have some of their nieces with them.³⁵ Since there was no obligation incumbent on those attending the schools of the canonesses to join the rank of the canonesses,³⁶ such provisions must be regarded a rather favorable evidence, that the educational influence of canonesses was extensive. We might, moreover, add that the canonesses enjoyed because of this liberty, considerable opportunities of broadening their own experience

³² Schäfer, 203.

³³ Ibid., 303 f.

³⁴ Ibid., 505.

³⁵ Cf. Ducas, *Les Chapitres Nobles des Dames*.

³⁶ Schäfer, 216 ff.

and knowledge. While, therefore, it must be conceded that the extensive relations of canonesses with the world proved detrimental to their religious life, from the educational point of view it must be regarded favorably, at least as long as the worldly character of the canonesses was not such as to make any real educational activity impossible.

A second distinctive feature of the canonical life, which determined to a great extent the character of the educational training given in the schools of canonesses, was the importance attached to the recitation of the Divine Office. This, as the preceding characteristic, is traceable directly to the practices in the primitive Church; for we know that a Divine Office, having practically the same divisions of "Hours," and consisting of about the same psalms, prayers and sacred readings existed from the beginning of the Church. There was, in fact, great importance attached to the Divine Office, as the prayer fulfilling eminently the command of Our Lord and the Apostle "to pray always, to pray without ceasing." In accordance with this general injunction it was considered an obligation even of the laity, as evinced by the author of the Apostolic Constitutions.³⁷

The Divine Office did not, therefore, originate with monasticism, as it has, in the first place, always been regarded as an essential duty of the clerical state,³⁸ becoming only incidentally and because of its application to Christians in general, a feature of the monastic life.³⁹ Consequently, when we read of the chanting of hymns and psalms by the solitaries of the deserts,⁴⁰ or of the chanting of the Divine Office in the communities of virgins,⁴¹ or the instructions of St. Ambrose,⁴² of St. Jerome,⁴³ and of St. Augustine,⁴⁴ to Christian virgins on the method or manner of chanting the Canonical Hours, it must be remembered that it was a long existing custom in the Church, and that it became a feature of the monastic life only as a result of the special adaptability of the religious life to this form of continual prayer.

A letter of St. Jerome to the virgin Eustochium informs us incidentally of the method and manner of psalmody, used in the

³⁷ Cf. Thomassin, *La Discipline de l'Eglise*, P. I, 121.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 131.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 122 f.

⁴⁰ *Loc. cit.*

⁴¹ S. Hieron., Ep. CVIII. *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 896.

⁴² *De Virginibus. Pat. Lat.*, XVI, 225.

⁴³ Ep. XXII, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 421.

⁴⁴ Ep. CCXI. *Pat. Lat.*, XXXIII, 960.

community of St. Paula at Bethlehem. It represents probably in general the method of reciting the Divine Office⁴⁵ and is therefore worthy of notice as an example for illustration. The virgins of this community coming from every rank and station of society lived in three separate buildings, each in charge of a special superioress. Although separated for work and meals, they all assembled in the common oratory for prayers and the Divine Office. At the given signal, a virgin in each establishment calling aloud "Alleluja," the virgins repaired at once and in silence to the oratory. The hours prescribed for the Divine Office were, the hour of midnight, six and nine o'clock in the morning, the noon hour and three and six o'clock in the evening. The psalms were not chanted in choir but each virgin chanted one or more psalms in order, while the others meditated on the meaning of those chanted. All knew the psalms by heart; for it was not tolerated that there should be anyone who did not know the psalms or learn daily some part of Holy Scripture.⁴⁶

The enthusiasm of religious for the Divine Office originated the institution known as the *laus perennis*, or continuous chant of the Canonical Hours. It was instituted in the East by St. Alexander, founder of the *Akoimetes* in the beginning of the fifth century. He divided the monks of the monastery, which he had founded on the Euphrates, into three divisions or choirs and assigned to them the continuous chant of the Divine Office as their principal duty.⁴⁷ It was first introduced into the West by the monks of Agaune. The practice of Agaune was soon emulated by several monasteries of men and women. St. Amatus adopted it in the canonical institution of Remiremont situated in the Vosges mountains.⁴⁸ St. Salaberga imitated in her monastery at Laon the fervor of the virgins of Remiremont (*Habendense*), when her community numbered almost three hundred maidens descended from the nobility of the Franks.⁴⁹ Thus the Divine praises resounded without ceasing in these fervent religious communities. It must, however, be remarked that the *laus*

⁴⁵ Thomassin, 130.

⁴⁶ *Pat. Lat.* XXII, 896.

⁴⁷ Heimbucher, I, 142.

⁴⁸ "Tanta vero principio earum religio, tantus fervor erat, ut, cum plurimae istuc virgines confluxissent, eas in septem turmas, duodenis puellis per singulas deputatis, distinxerit Amatus, ut die nocteque jugem ac perennem psalmodiam continuarent." Mabillon, *Annales Ordinis S. Benedicti*, I, 288.

⁴⁹ "Has Salaberga in turmas divisit, quae sibi vicissim succedentes, juges ac perennes Deo laudes, more Agaunensium monachorum, virginumque Habendensium, die nocteque concinerent." *Ibid.*, 347.

perennis was not an innovation to the method of chanting the Canonical Hours, since the repetitions thus secured by the various groups of religious, as they succeeded each other to chant the parts of the Divine Office, simply filled out the intervals that elapsed between the customary hours of chant.

In the institutions of canonesses, the chanting of the Divine Office, was one of the foremost duties of the canonesses, more so even than of the canons, whose pastoral duties absorbed a considerable part of their time.⁵⁰ It was, in fact, considered so essential a part of the canonical life that the very title "canonical," as applied to the institutions of canons and canonesses, has sometimes been considered to have had its origin in the obligation of canons and canonesses to chant the Divine or Canonical Office. The rules and constitutions of canonesses accordingly emphasize the obligations of canonesses in regard to the Divine Office and point out clearly the important means whereby they might acquit themselves in a worthy manner and with spiritual profit of this, their great duty. The rule for canonesses compiled by Amalarius ordains that the "Dei ministerium" is to have the precedence of all the other duties of the canonesses. All shall repair to the Church for the chanting of the canonical hours as soon as the signal is given. In the church the canonesses are to conduct themselves with great reverence and respect and attend with diligence to the celebration of the Divine Office which enjoins a threefold duty, "aut orent, aut legant, aut audiant." Only sickness or an act enjoined by obedience can be considered a lawful excuse to be absent from choir.⁵¹ The synod of Mainz, held in 847, renews in canon sixteen the injunction on canonesses to celebrate the Divine Office worthily: "Sanctimoniales vero in monasterio constitutae habeant studium in legendo, et in cantando, in psalmorum celebratione sive oratione et horas canonicas matutinum videlicet, primam, tertiam, sextam, nonam, vespertinam completorium pariter celebrent, . . . et ut cetera continentur, et quae a sanctis patribus illis constituta sunt."⁵² The Rule of St. Augustine, in the original, prescribed that the psalms and hymns of the Divine Office should be a mental and vocal prayer at the same time and that the ritual

⁵⁰ Schäfer, 184.

⁵¹ *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 965.

⁵² Mansi, *Collectio Amplissima Conciliorum*, XIV, 908.

of chant should be exactly observed;⁵³ that of St. Norbert required of the Premonstratensian canonesses to rise at midnight for the Divine Office, which practice is still observed by them. Their time was to be spent in spinning and sewing when they were not occupied with the recitation of the Divine Office.⁵⁴ In the institutions of the Gilbertine canonesses the precentrix was responsible for the church services; "she wrote out the table of services with the names of those who were to take part in them for the week, and chose out the books for the Collations."⁵⁵

The importance of the Divine Office in canonical institutions is further illustrated in the provisions made by the rules for the training of candidates. As the rules specify the duties they also point out the means whereby they may be accomplished. They provide that in regard to the chant of the Divine Office, candidates should receive a careful training according to the method outlined by St. Jerome in his letter to Laeta.⁵⁶

That the training necessary to candidates for the intelligent and creditable chanting of the Divine Office was considerable, is evident not only from the fact of the comprehensiveness of the office itself but also from the knowledge of the complex system of musical notation which it presupposes. That an artistic melody of chant was much in vogue in institutions of canonesses, we learn from a rather reproachful statement made by Cardinal Vitry: "Sunt autem in eisdem ecclesiis (canonicarum) pariter canonici seculares in diebus festis et solemnibus ex altera parte chori cum praedictis domicellis cananentes, earum modulationibus equipollenter respondere studentes . . . Similiter et in processionibus composite et ornate, canonici ex una parte, et Domine ex alia parte concinentes procedunt."⁵⁷ The canonesses must have possessed a considerable musical training to merit this, probably not intended, encomium; for it was the spiritual character of the services that the Cardinal evidently considered when he reproachfully penned this statement. If, moreover, the deeply moralizing influence and ethical significance, besides the intellectual training required for the chanting of the Divine Office, are estimated, no mean educational value will be attached to this eminently liturgical form of prayer.

⁵³ *Pat. Lat.*, XXXIII, 960.

⁵⁴ Kirkfleet, 124.

⁵⁵ Graham, 68.

⁵⁶ *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 970.

⁵⁷ *Historia Occidentalis*, lib. II, c. 31.

A third characteristic feature, distinguishing in particular the secular from the regular canonesses, as well as religious in general, consisted in the fact that secular canonesses were not bound by the three vows of religion. They made only a simple promise of obedience and chastity when they were admitted as members of an institution. This promise did not impose any obligation of stability; the canonesses possessing complete freedom to return to the world, even to enter the married state, if they wished to do so. This liberty of canonesses is referred to at times in deeds and wills by which property was conferred on canonical institutions, and which was usually to be disposed of as prebends for relatives admitted as canonesses. There are several records of this kind found in the institution of Obermünster in Regensburg. Countess Bertha donated to this institution, in the tenth century, some property to be used as prebends for two of her grand-children. The document, by which the transfer was made, provides, that if the two girls did not make vows, the property should still belong to the institution, in order that the charitable deed might benefit the soul of the countess and that of her husband. About the same time, a nobleman, Bernhard, made a similar donation to this institution for the benefit of his two sisters. This property was also to remain in possession of the institution in case these sisters should leave it. Another donation provides prebends for three sisters; "if one or all of them should leave, the donation becomes the property of the institution." A still more remarkable instance is recorded for St. Waudru. In the year 1171, a considerable grant of property was made to that institution for the use of several canonesses; the donation provides that if some of them die or leave the institution in order to marry, those remaining are to have the usufruct of their property. There is also preserved a document of Archbishop Frederic I of Cologne, dated from 1126, wherein it is stated that there were scarcely any congregations of women in the diocese "in which the vow of chastity was made."⁵⁸ More numerous examples are found in the centuries following.⁵⁹

The duty of continence obliged, finally, only the abbess and some of the more important officers, as the *praeposita*, *decana* and *custodia*, who in the early centuries received the consecra-

⁵⁸ Cf. Schäfer, 215.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 217 ff.

tion of deaconesses, or some other form of episcopal benediction. In general, however, canonesses appear to have availed themselves rarely of the liberty to return to the world, probably not more frequently than the early sanctimoniales, or the canons who enjoyed the same freedom before they received higher orders.⁶⁰ Institutions of canonesses became, in consequence, more prominently educational institutions, as they admitted girls freely for education who had probably little intention of assuming later the duties of the canonical life. This at least, seems to be the conclusion deducible from the repeated mention of "return to the world" found in the deeds of donation and similar documents.

Among other less distinctly "canonical" features which are of educational significance must be mentioned the custom of erecting a xenodochium in connection with every canonical institution. A xenodochium served in the early Church as a hospice for travelers, an asylum for the poor and unfortunate, a shelter for the virgins and widows supported by the Church, a hospital for the sick and finally a home for parentless, exposed and abandoned children. "That which St. Basil had founded, near to Caesarea, and which Gregory of Nazianzen celebrates in the funeral oration of his friend, under the name of Basilias, was probably of this kind, though originally it was intended for lepers." Animated by the example of St. Basil, the chorepiscopi and the governors vied with each other in the erection of these charitable institutions, "so that Xenodochia were to be seen in all his diocese, and even in the country places and hamlets of Cappadocia."⁶¹ St. Basil's example found imitators not only in Cappadocia but throughout the Eastern and Western Church. Popes, bishops and laymen endeavored zealously to propagate so beneficent an institution. "The most of these establishments were placed under the inspection of the bishops, whether they had founded them or not. It was the bishop who named . . . the immediate superiors of these institutions; the nurses themselves and the subaltern officers, held their tenure mediately or immediately of him. He had in like manner, conjointly with his superintendents, the management of affairs for the support of the hospitals, at least when the donors had not made another disposition of them, or when he had not rendered himself unworthy

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 219 f.

⁶¹ Chastel, *The Charity of the Primitive Churches*, trans. by Matile, 239. Philadelphia, 1857.

of their confidence. In a word, the administration of hospitals were considered as an affair essentially ecclesiastical."⁶²

Monastic life had not originally the practice of charity for its direct object. Yet in more than one way did those who embraced it come to the relief of the poor and afflicted, of the widows and orphans. Speaking of the death of St. Macrina, St. Gregory of Nyssa says: "Saddest of all in their grief were those who called on her as mother and nurse. These were they whom she picked up, exposed by the roadside in the time of famine. She had nursed and reared them, and led them to the pure and stainless life."⁶³ The virgins spoken of by St. Augustine, who gathered the abandoned children and presented them for baptism, were probably deaconesses, who, like the deacons, had the special duty to search each day for the poor and unfortunate and to give information to the bishop concerning them. It can hardly be doubted that parentless, exposed, and abandoned children, with whose raising no charitable persons could be found willing to charge themselves, or who could not be provided for in special institutions as the Orphanotrophia, Brephotrophia or Xenodochia, were raised and educated in the Diaconiae.⁶⁴ Significant in this regard is evidently the following statement made by St. Augustine: "xenodochia et monasteria postea sunt appellata novis nominibus, res tamen ipsae et ante nomina sua erant et religionis veritate firmantur."⁶⁵ It is further significant that this duty of charitable service came within the sphere of deaconesses who frequently presided over the communities of virgins or fulfilled in them some office of responsibility, as that of choir mistress.⁶⁶ Such offices were held in the early Christian centuries by the deaconesses Publia at Antioch, Lampadia at Annesi, Marthana at Seleucia, and probably also the deaconesses Amprucla and Olympias, as is apparent from the letters of St. John Chrysostom addressed to them.⁶⁷ Very important is the gloss quoted by Schäfer, in which the office of deaconess is identified with that of abbess; particularly, because it represents that idea of so late a date as the Carolingian period to which the gloss be-

⁶² Ibid., 241 f.

⁶³ Life of St. Macrina, in *Early Church Classics*, 60.

⁶⁴ Krieg, "Findelkinder." *Real-Encyklopädie der christlichen Alterthümer*, ed. F. H. Kraus, I, 209 f.

⁶⁵ Tract. in Joan. 97. *Pat. Lat.*, XXXV, 1879.

⁶⁶ Cf. Robinson, *The Ministry of Deaconesses*, 76. London, 1898.

⁶⁷ Loc. cit.; Schäfer, 52.

longs.⁶⁸ There are, moreover, a number of instances on record according to which the title of abbess and deaconess appears to have been used synonymously. Thus Ida, abbess of Remiremont, is called diaconissa in the eighth century. For Rome and its vicinity, six abbesses have been mentioned who had received the consecration of deaconesses in the tenth century. Two further examples are recorded for the eleventh; one in the life of St. Nilus the younger, who addresses the superioress of some convent as diaconissa, the other in a letter of Abelard in which he applies the title Paraclitensis diaconissa to the abbess of the Paraclete.⁶⁹

The import of this fact, for the purpose of this treatise, lies in the tradition of the functions attached to the name of deaconess. The functions deaconesses generally exercised in the early Church consisted in the care of the poor and sick and the preparation and instruction of feminine catechumens for baptism. They appear also to have exercised some sort of supervision over the feminine part of the congregation; as they had the duty to correct the obstinate and instruct the ignorant among them. Whether we draw our inferences from Tertulian's treatise *De virginibus velandis* 9,⁷⁰ or consider certain statements of *The Shephard of Hermas*, Second Vision, 4⁷¹ and other treatises which mention the care of orphans and widows, we must arrive at the conclusion that the education of orphans, provided for by the Christian communities, was specially the duty of the deaconess. As nurse and teacher of orphans she had probably under her care both boys and girls, although otherwise her services were limited to the feminine part of the community.⁷²

The assistance of deaconesses at baptism was no longer required when adult baptism became unusual. This fact, and the various disorders which the office of deaconess had at times occasioned, in addition to the pronounced anti-canonical character of the office itself, led early to the abolition of the office of deaconess for ecclesiastical purposes. The only functions which deaconesses continued to exercise were those which they performed as superiors of congregations of women, such as the service of

⁶⁸ Op. cit., 51.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 53.

⁷⁰ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, II, 901 ss.

⁷¹ *Early Church Classics* I, 70 ff. ed., C. Taylor. London, 1903.

⁷² Zscharnack, *Der Dienst der Frau in den ersten Jahrhunderten der christlichen Kirche*, 127 ff. Göttingen, 1902.

the poor, the sick and pilgrims, who were taken care of in the hospices or xenodochia attached to these houses. It might be added that the care and education of helpless children could hardly have been excluded from the charitable works of these institutions, since monasteries in general charged themselves with the maintenance and education of such children from the very beginning of monastic life.⁷³

As superioress of a community of virgins the deaconess retained also her duty of instructress and teacher of the virgins under her care. It was indeed enjoined on her by the very formula employed at her consecration. That found in the *Ordo Romanus*, which dates from the Carolingian period, reads in part, “. . . quique deinceps per apostolicam intentionem sanctarum huius ordinationis manibus foeminarum sexus ipsius adolescentulas ac uniores instrui cum sancti chrismatis visitatione iussisti.”⁷⁴ This duty of deaconesses is consequently also taken notice of in conciliar legislation. The superioress above all, has the supervision over the canonesses; she is charged with the training of their character, and exercises in their regard the “cura regendarum animarum,” in as much as she is to instruct them in religion and the duties of the monastic life.⁷⁵ The rule of canonesses assigns to her the first place among the sanctimoniales employed as teachers of the young aspirants to the canonical life.⁷⁶

Canonical institutions of women were not, however, always governed by abbesses who had received the consecration of deaconess, but it is remarkable that the right to this consecration was deemed their special privilege. There was, for example, no Benedictine monastery in which the abbess was consecrated deaconess. Whether a few or many of the abbesses of canonical institutions received the consecration of deaconess, it is still significant as the survival of an institution that was in several ways of educational importance.

The hospitals attached to canonical institutions served in general as a shelter to the poor and afflicted; at times, however, people of more fortunate circumstances found in them also a comfortable home or hospitable shelter. Sometimes they were the

⁷³ Chastel, 251 f.; Schäfer, 54 ff.

⁷⁴ Quoted by Schäfer, 53.

⁷⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 142 f.

⁷⁶ *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 965.

benefactors of the institution who spent there the days of their old age; provisions to this effect being sometimes made by the donors of property to institutions. Pilgrims, according to the customs of hospitality, that formed so attractive a feature of medieval monastic life, were in particular hospitably received and cared for.⁷⁷ Of special importance is the injunction of the rule of canonesses providing that destitute widows and poor girls should be given a home and subsistence: "Sit etiam intra monasterium receptaculum ubi viduae et pauperulae tantummodo recipiantur et alantur."⁷⁸ Accordingly, we find in several institutions of canonesses a number of poor women and girls who had their regular abode in the institution without being members of it. In Essen it was the custom to support twelve, in other institutions a smaller number was cared for. They were at times called Beguines, which implied that they depended on the charity of others for their maintenance. By some they are considered an early form of the institution of Beguines who were very numerous in parts of Germany and the Low Countries during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁷⁹ Probably, poor girls thus cared for in the institutions of canonesses enjoyed also some educational advantages; for we learn that they fulfilled certain duties which presuppose at least an elementary education. In Essen and at St. Mary of the Capitol in Cologne, they had apparently the duty of assisting at the funeral services of the canonesses and to chant the Psalter at their graves.⁸⁰

2. Educational Provisions of the Rules

The educational provisions in monastic rules were naturally in harmony with the ideals of the religious life itself. Founders of monasteries sought in the first place the salvation of souls. This supernatural ideal determined at once the main features of the religious life, and gave force and direction to individual effort and collective endeavor in the devotion to the duties of the religious life. The active works of charity, such as the care of the sick, the poor, the orphans and the Christian education of youth were always subordinated as means to an end. Yet, the active ministry of religious to the needs of mankind consti-

⁷⁷ Schäfer, 254.

⁷⁸ *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 972.

⁷⁹ Schäfer, 254 ff.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 255.

tuted always an important duty of the religious life. Even if it was limited to intercessory prayers and penitential practices for the benefit of the world, it rendered to mankind an inappreciable service.

It was the rule in each monastic institution which determined the practices of charity as well as of all educational activity. It is true that in the early centuries of monasticism, rules lacked precision. We perceive in them a great want of detail and elements of organization, so much so, that in most instances it is impossible to construct from them alone a picture of monastic community life. However, this very want of detail, this lack of definiteness is important for the evaluation of medieval, monastic legislation. In regard to education, such statements as, "Literas omnes discant,"⁸¹ or "Codices certa hora singulis diebus petantur,"⁸² which passed either literally, or slightly modified, into most rules of the period, easily adapted themselves to a very liberal interpretation. They represent bits of economic monastic legislation, whose prestige lay in the fact of the pliability which their very indefiniteness gave to the rule. We may, therefore, not look to the rules precisely as the determining factor of the extent to which educational activity was carried on in an institution. This was generally determined by circumstances favorable to education, such as peaceful times, and political prosperity, or specially advantageous opportunities provided by the presence of some enterprising scholar, or head of the institution.

The monastic rules of this primitive epoch were very numerous. It might, in fact, be said that there were as many rules as monasteries. Founders enjoyed an absolute liberty in the selection of rules for their monastic establishments; hence, the great variety and richness of monastic legislation, which has not been equaled at any later period. Southern Gaul was evidently most fruitful in this regard. The number of monastic rules produced in Gaul exceeds that of the Orient,⁸³ and possibly every other section of the monastic world. Among the various monastic rules compiled during the earlier Christian centuries in Gaul we find also the first complete monastic rule compiled pur-

⁸¹Regula S. Aureliani. Holstenius. *Codex Regularum, Monasticarum et Canonicarum*, I, 372. (1759).

⁸²Regula S. Augustini, *ibid.*, 351.

⁸³Besse, *Les Moines de l'Ancienne France*. Archives de la France Monastique, II, 45. Paris. 1906.

posely for women.⁸⁴ Other rules for women, that have come down to us from this early period are—besides the Rules of St. Augustine and St. Caesarius—that of St. Aurelius, successor to St. Caesarius in the bishopric of Arles,⁸⁵ that of St. Donatus, bishop of Besançon,⁸⁶ a rule by some unknown author,⁸⁷ that of St. Leander of Seville,⁸⁸ the rule for canonesses,⁸⁹ and a rule for hermitesses compiled in the twelfth century by St. Aelred, abbot of the Cistercian abbey of Rievaulx, in the diocese of York.⁹⁰

In spite of the great variety and number of monastic rules, that came into existence, there were yet many elements of unity in them. The watchfulness of the Church kept ever in check the disorders that were liable to arise from the wide scope of freedom permitted to bishops and founders of monastic institutions in matters of discipline. Besides, religious founders were guided by the same ideal of evangelical perfection, and all had the same profound esteem for monastic traditions so that a too great divergence in monastic legislation was not likely to occur. The Rule of St. Basil, as translated by Rufinus, and that of St. Pachomius, translated by St. Jerome, found early application in the monastic rules of the West. These rules, together with the works of Cassian, *De institutis coenobiorum*⁹¹ and the *Collationes Patrum*,⁹² the monastic writings of St. Augustine,⁹³ of St. Jerome,⁹⁴ and of the Fathers generally,⁹⁵ besides, the influence that proceeded from such monastic centers as Lerins, determined to a very great extent the common characteristics of the monastic rules in the early Middle Ages. All founders, however, did not draw from these sources with equal copiousness and the same wisdom. But whatever matter, drawn from these sources, they did incorporate in their rules sufficed to establish in the numerous monasteries a background of common observances, of which it is at times not easy to determine the origin.

An important feature to note in connection with the variety of rules is the influence which certain ones exercised upon others.

⁸⁴ Regula S. Caesarii. Holstenius, 1, 354 ss.; cf. Malnory, *Saint Césaire*, 257. Paris, 1894.

⁸⁵ Holstenius, 1, 370.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 377.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 394.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 407.

⁸⁹ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 935.

⁹⁰ Holstenius, 1, 420.

⁹¹ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XLIX, 53 ss.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 477 ss.

⁹³ Heimbucher, 1, 167.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 163 ff.

The rule of St. Augustine, for example, exercised a wide influence upon most others of this epoch. The rare discretion and breadth of view, which St. Augustine evinced for the monastic life and its various observances in his rule, destined for women, made it adaptable also to the needs of communities of men. It sufficed to substitute the masculine gender for the feminine and to make a small number of suppressions. Having been thus modified, it became at a much later date the *Regula ad Servos Dei*. Later, the canons regular and hermits of St. Augustine contributed greatly to make it one of the four great rules approved by the Church. All rules designated as Augustinian, at a later date, are based upon this rule, which St. Augustine in form of a letter addressed to the moniales of Hippo, in 423,⁹⁶ his treatise *De opere monachorum*,⁹⁷ and two of his discourses, 355 and 356, *De moribus clericorum*.⁹⁸

Among the numerous sources from which legislators of occidental monasticism drew the doctrines which are contained in their rules, the Rule of St. Augustine holds a conspicuous place. St. Cæsarius borrowed from it articles 8, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32,⁹⁹ bearing chiefly on the virtues proper to the religious life. *The Regula Tarnatensis*,¹⁰⁰ written probably for the monastery of Agaune, about the year 470,¹⁰¹ has so extensively drawn from the Rule of St. Augustine, that the two rules have been considered identical.¹⁰² The rule of St. Cæsarius in its turn exercised a wide influence on monastic life in Gaul. It was not only adopted in many convents of women, but entered also to a great extent into the composition of other rules compiled for nuns. St. Aurelius borrowed freely from it for his *Regula ad virgines*,¹⁰³ and St. Donatus passed it almost wholly into the rule that he composed for the monastery founded by his mother Flavia at Jussa. This rule of St. Donatus was in turn adopted by several convents of women, notably that of Chamalières near Clermont.¹⁰⁴ St. Benedict, the great patriarch of western monastic life, likewise recognized the merit of the

⁹⁶ *Pat. Lat.*, XXXIII, 958 ss.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, XL, 527 ss.

⁹⁸ Cf. Besse, *Le Monachisme Africain*, 59. Paris, 1900 (?); Heimbucher, I, 167.

⁹⁹ Cf. Besse, *Les Moines de l' Ancienne France*, 55, note 2; Malnory, 260 f.

¹⁰⁰ Holstenius, II, 119 ff.

¹⁰¹ Heimbucher, I, 174.

¹⁰² Besse, *Le Monachisme Africain*, 51.

¹⁰³ Besse, *Les Moines de l' Ancienne France*, 56.

¹⁰⁴ Besse, *ut supra*, 52 f.; Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, I, 289. Leipzig, 1904.

Rule of St. Augustine and drew from it a number of valuable doctrines for his immortal rule.¹⁰⁵

It seems important to cite here for the sake of illustration and information on educational matters some of the principal educational passages which have been adopted from the Rule of St. Augustine by the rules mentioned above. As has been noted before, they do not furnish a standard by which we can measure the educational endeavor of any institution that adopted the Augustinian Rule or any other related to it. But the same may be said of any of our modern religious rules, supplemented as they are, by constitutions, chapter regulations, customs, etc., which regulate even in greater detail the duties and practices of the religious life. No one, examining any of them for educational information centuries hence, could, if bereft of any other information, or an amount comparatively equal to that which we are able to obtain on the subject of monastic education, and in particular on that of women of this remote period, form in the least an adequate idea of the elaborateness of our modern educational system. And, indeed, the same applies to all educational legislation past or present.¹⁰⁶ There is always much tacitly assumed in such legislation, much left to the initiative of the civil or religious body for which the laws are made.

There is no idea expressed in the Augustinian Rule having any direct bearing on the education of children, or the moniales for whom the rule was composed. The few items of a literary nature found in it are suggestive rather than indicative of any educational activity. But even this fact will be appreciated when we remember that the Rule of St. Augustine was merely a letter addressed to the moniales of Hippo, by which the saint sought to reestablish peace and harmony in the community, for which end he offered his advice in a certain number of regulations. A simple statement, therefore, in regard to reading or the care of books implies very much more than the idea expressed.

The following citations may be premised with the assumption that a reading-knowledge of Latin was generally required of all religious, since without it they could have hardly fulfilled the obligations which the rules imposed on them. The rules for women, which are to a greater or less extent Augustinian in

¹⁰⁵ Besse, *Le Monachisme Africain*, 51.

¹⁰⁶ McCormick, *Education of the Laity in the Early Middle Ages*, 6 f. Washington, 1912.

character, because of their liberal borrowings from that rule, have in regard to education, as in other points, gone beyond the few suggestions of that rule. Undoubtedly, the literary traditions of Eastern monastic life, which did not exclude the education of children, contributed much to the development of educational ideas, traces of which may be perceived in the rules of that period.

A comparative list of the principal passages of educational value found in the Augustinian and other rules for women based on it.

I. Reg. S. Augustini.

Cum acceditis ad mensam donec inde surgatis, quod vobis secundum consuetudinem legitur sine tumultu et contentionibus audite. Nec solæ vobis fauces sumant cibum, sed et aures percipiant Dei verbum. V.

Reg. S. Cæsarii.

Sedentes ad mensam taceant, et animum lectioni intendant. Cum autem lectio cessaverit, meditatio sancta de corde non cesset. . . . Nec solæ vobis fauces sumant cibum, sed et audiant Dei verbum. XVI.

Reg. S. Aureliani.

Sedentes ad mensam taceant, et lectio quotidie omni tempore cum cibis sumitur legatur. Uterque homo, et exterior cibo, et interior verbo Dei reficiatur. XXXII.

Reg. S. Donati.

Sedentes ad mensam taceant, et animo lectioni intendant. Cum autem lectio cessaverit, meditatio sancta de corde non cesset. . . . Nec solæ vobis fauces sumant cibum, sed et aures audiant Dei verbum. XXXIII.

Of what this reading at table consisted may be deduced, perhaps, from two other rules in which it is specified. St. Jerome in his *Regula Monachorum* enjoins: "Sacram Testamento, et de novo, sanctorum gestis et dictis, singulis hebdomadibus deputata soror comedentibus lectionem legat,"¹⁰⁷ and the *Regula cujusdam Patris ad Virgines*: "Ante mensam vero semper Capitulum Regulæ unum aut amplius, si Abbatissæ placuerit, legatur: ut cum cibis carnem reficit lectio animam satiet."¹⁰⁸

Concerning reading in general, the influence of the Augustinian Rule on the rules named above is less distinctly evident; the regulation, however, in regard to the distribution of books, evidently suggests similar obligations.

¹⁰⁷ *Pat. Lat.*, XXX, 422.

¹⁰⁸ Holstenius, 1, 399.

II. Reg. S. Augustini.

. . . quæ codicibus praeponuntur, sine murmure serviant sororibus suis. XIII.

Codicis certa hora singulis diebus petantur: extra horam quæ petiverint, non accipant. XIV.

Reg. S. Cæsarii.

Quæ, . . . codicibus . . . praeponuntur, super Evangelium claves accipant, et sine murmuratione serviant reliquis. XXX.

Omnes literas discant; omni tempore duabus horis, hoc est a mane usque ad horam secundam, lectioni vacent. XVII.

Reliquis vero in unum operantibus, una de sororibus usque ad tertiam legat, de reliquo meditatio verbi Dei et oratio de corde non cesset. XVIII.

Reg. S. Aureliani.

Literas omnes discant. XXVI.

. . . omnes lectioni vacent usque ad horam tertiam;
(Quomodo psallere debeant.)

Reg. S. Donati.

A secunda hora ad tertiam, si aliqua necessitas ut operentur non fuerit, vacent lectioni. . . . Reliquis vero in unum operantibus una de senioribus legat: de reliquo meditatio verbi Dei de corde non cesset. XX.

The psalms are to be chanted with reverence, piety and understanding:

III. Reg. S. Augustini.

In oratorio nemo agat, nisi ad quod est factum, . . . Psalmis et hymnis cum oratis Deum, hoc versetur in corde, quod profertur in voce. IV.

Reg. S. Cæsarii.

. . . dum psallitur, fabulari omnino vel operari non liceat. VIII.

Cum vero psalmis et hymnis oratis Deum, id versetur in corde, quod profertur in voce. XX.

Reg. S. Aureliani.

Dum psallitur, studeant sanctæ animæ vestræ non vagari animo, verum etiam nec operari aut loqui præsumant; sed psallite sapienter, . . . XXV.

Reg. S. Donati.

Dum in oratorio psallitur: fabulare omnino non liceat. Cum vero psalmis et hymnis vocatis Deo id versetur in corde quod præfertur in voce, . . . XVII.

Several other passages, important educationally, bearing more specifically on the education of children and the admission and training of candidates, might be pointed out in the Rules of St. Aurelius and St. Donatus, in which the influence of the Rule of St. Cæsarius is particularly evident. Some significant educational passages are also found in the other rules which have come down to us. That of St. Leander, for example, gives us some important information as to what reading was considered suitable for religious women, and the importance they should attach to it.¹⁰⁹ The *Regula cuiusdam Patris* is particularly valuable for the information it gives on the discipline to be observed in the education of children.¹¹⁰ A passage in the Rule of St. Aurelius takes notice of the tender age of children to exempt them from the observance of the regular order of the day,¹¹¹ and another, in that of St. Donatus, ordains that the religious may not keep, give or receive either tablets (tabulas) or pencils (graphium) without the permission of the superioress.¹¹²

More instructive on educational matters than either the Augustinian Rule or the rules related to it, as the *Regula Sanctimonialium* or rule for canonesses compiled by Amalarius of Metz. It is based upon an ancient rule for sanctimoniales, the *Regula cuiusdam Patris ad Virgines*, which is itself of special educational importance.¹¹³ The provisions for the education of girls in the former are found chiefly in chapter twenty-two. It reproduces substantially the theory of St. Jerome on the education of girls, as contained in his letter to Læta on the education of her little daughter Paula. The regula draws attention, in the first place, to ecclesiastical regulations on the education of girls in convents: "Religio ecclesiastica docet ut puellæ quæ in monasteriis erudiuntur, cum omni pietatis affectu et vigilantissime curæ studio nutriantur; ne si lubricæ ætatis annos indisciplinatæ vivendo transgerint, aut fix aut nullatenus corrigi postea possint." In accordance with these prescriptions only such of the religious are to be chosen as mistresses as are of a commendable life, and they are to exercise such vigilance over the girls under their care, that they will be protected from the frivolities of childhood;

¹⁰⁹ Holstenius, I, 412 s.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 404.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 372.

¹¹² Ibid., 380.

¹¹³ Specht, *Geschichte des Unterrichtswesens in Deutschland*, 274. Stuttgart, 1835.

they are to train them rather in the sacred sciences so that, being occupied with them, their minds might find no leisure to wander about. The method of education to be followed is that outlined by St. Jerome in the treatise mentioned above, which will be discussed at greater length in the following chapter. The program of studies is, with certain modifications, also that prescribed by St. Jerome for the education of Paula. Much attention is given to character training and good manners.¹¹⁴

Passages of educational importance are also found in other sections of the rule, particularly in the first six chapters which introduce the rule proper and which consist entirely of extracts from the writings of the Fathers. The fact that they are in the form of selections renders them of special value, as they indicate more specifically what rulings of the Fathers were considered suitable to regulate the life of the canonesses. In regard to literary occupation, we find in them some of the same choice passages that were addressed to the early Christian virgins. Thus from the sermon of St. Augustine to virgins, the injunction ordaining a zealous application to reading is repeated: "*Oriens sol videat codicem in manu tua, et post secundam horam operare opus tuum.*"¹¹⁵ A passage from the letter of St. Jerome to the virgin Demetrias urges in particular the reading of Holy Scripture: "*Unum illud tibi, nata Deo, praeque omnibus unum praedicam, et repetens iterumque, iterumque monebo, ut animum tuum sacrae lectionis amore occupes.*"¹¹⁶ Another selection specifies the order of the day, in which the reading and studying of the Scriptures, the chanting of the Divine Office and manual work form the chief occupation of the religious: "*Christum vestire in pauperibus, pascere in esurientibus, et praeter psalmorum, et orationis ordinem, quod tibi hora tertia, sexta, nona, ad vesperam, media nocte, et mane semper est exercendum, statue quot horis sacram Scripturam ediscere debeas, quanto tempore legere, non ad laborem, sed ad delectationem et instructionem animae. Cumque haec finieris spatia et frequenter te ad figenda genua sollicitudo animae suscitaverit; habeto lanam semper in manibus, vel staminis pollice fila deducito, vel ad torquenda subtegmina in alevolis fusa vertantur, aliarumque neta, aut in*

¹¹⁴ *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 969 s.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 935.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 944.

globum collige, aut in texenda compone. Si tantis operum varietatibus fueris occupata, nunquam tibi dies longi sunt."¹¹⁷ Not only is the rule of reading in the refectory to be observed, but the canonesses are to meet daily for spiritual reading in common: "Illis namque in refectorio comedentibus, et religiose silentium tenentibus, continuatim legatur lectio et intentissime ab his audiatur. Ad collationem quotidie veniant, et hanc institutionem, sive aliarum divinarum Scripturarum lectiones perlegant, et de animæ suæ salute pertractent."¹¹⁸ The reading matter is to include, besides the constitutions and the Scriptures, only the writings of such learned men whose belief is unquestioned: "Post Scripturas sanctas doctorum hominum tractatus lege eorum duntaxat, quorum fides nota est."¹¹⁹ For the chanting of the Divine Office, shall be cultivated rather an appreciation and understanding of the text, than a pleasing modulation and harmony of music: "Cum psalmis dicis, cujus verba dicis agnoscere; et in compunctione magis animi, quam in tinnulæ vocis dulcedine delectare."¹²⁰ Worldly songs and music are to be shunned as the fatal songs of sirens: "Cantor pellatur, ut noxius. Fidicinas, et psaltrias, et istiusmodi chorum diaboli, quasi mortifera sirenarum carmina proturba ex ædibus tuis."¹²¹

Other passages of a similar nature might be added, but these suffice to indicate that intellectual occupation was not debarred from the institutions of canonesses, by the rules under which they lived. On the contrary, the injunctions in regard to reading are so common, frequent and urgent that they hardly permit us to doubt that the canonesses devoted a considerable part of their time to it. Moreover, the restrictions imposed by the rules on the scope of the reading matter could hardly be considered stringent. The very canon, quoted above, that specifies what authors ought not to be read, admits evidently a very liberal interpretation as to which might be read. Consequently, as far as the rules were concerned, educational activity was not only lawful for the canonesses, but was to a certain extent an obligation imposed on them.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 945.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 963.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 947.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 958.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 947.

3. *The System of Double Monasteries*

Important educationally is also the fact that the institutions of canonesses were either double monasteries, in the ordinary sense of the term, or greatly resembled them in their arrangements, in as much as chapters of canons were usually associated with them for the spiritual ministration of the canonesses. Monasteries of this type, in which a community of "regular" priests ministered to the spiritual needs of a community of "regular" women, were known at an early date as "*monasteria duplicia*." "Later on, contiguity to a common church, in which the monastic services, or parts of them, were held for both sexes, ultimately acquires the force of a specific character,"¹²² but the spiritual ministration was "the one essential and original character." Other features also became more specific in course of time and under particular circumstances.

The practice of establishing houses of religious women in the neighborhood or immediate vicinity of communities of men dates from the earliest days of monasticism. St. Pachomius, the organizer of the cœnobitic life, founded a community of religious women near his monastery of monks at Tabennisi. Placing it under the direction of his sister Mary, he prescribed for it the same rule that he had given to the communities of men, nine of which had been founded in the region of the Nile, before he established the community of women at Tabennisi. Another convent for women was subsequently founded by him near his monastery Tesmine. St. Pachomius confided the spiritual direction of the community at Tabennisi to Peter, a venerable old monk of the community. Besides the spiritual assistance, which the nuns received from the community of men, they were also aided otherwise. Monks were appointed to oversee the construction of buildings by men who performed this work in their own communities, and to perform such other work for the nuns that required the hands of men. The nuns, on their part, were charged with the fabrication of woolen habits for the whole community. The spirit thus engendered was one of mutual helpfulness, which also became a very distinctive feature in most monasteries of this type. All precautions had been taken by the holy founder to avoid suspicion and evil talk that this proximity of the sexes

¹²² Bateson, M., "Origin and Early History of Double Monasteries." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, New Series, XLII, 138.

might give rise to. The houses of women were separated from those of men by the Nile, and the monks, who were charged with work in the convent of the women, had to observe very stringent rules of discipline that would raise them above all danger of reproach. It may be remarked that St. Pachomius was imitated in this foresight by all founders of this type of monasteries, and that the discipline observed subsequently in such institutions was of the most regular and edifying kind. Records of abuses, that arose in consequence of the system, are of exceptionally rare occurrence.¹²³

Other double monasteries of this early period, of which we have an account, were the Basilian monasteries at Annesi, near Neo-Cæsarea, and those founded by St. Paula at Bethlehem. St. Macrina presided over the community of women at Annesi, while her younger brother Peter governed the community of men. Both communities observed the Rule of St. Basil and were separated from each other by the river Iris. The intercourse between the religious was strictly regulated by the rules. At Bethlehem St. Paula ruled the community of women and St. Jerome that of men.¹²⁴

The educational advantages derived from this system of organization are apparent, even from these first types of double monasteries. In each instance, both communities observed the same rules; at Tabennisi and Bethlehem, that of St. Pachomius enjoined especially the instruction of the members of the monastery. "If ignorant in letters, they are to have the rule explained to them, and shall be sent to one to teach them, and standing before him, shall diligently learn from him with all thankfulness . . . there shall be no one in the monastery who shall not learn letters, and know something of the Scriptures, at least the New Testament and the Psalter."¹²⁵ Both rules provided for the education of children. That of St. Basil enjoined that the monks should educate them "as children," adding that the girls should take their meals separately from the boys and that they should occupy separate dwellings. It was in accordance with the rules, that the community of St. Macrina had undertaken the care and education of orphan girls.¹²⁶ Conditions were particularly

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 138 ff.; Heimbucher, 1, 107 ff.; Montalembert, II, 700 ff.

¹²⁴ Bateson, 140; Heimbucher, 1, 122.

¹²⁵ Drane, *Christian Schools and Scholars*, 21. London, 1881.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 21 ff.; Bateson, 141; Heimbucher, 1, 160.

favorable to learning in the community of St. Paula. So enthusiastic a student was this holy widow that she was not satisfied to pursue, with an intense zeal, the study of the Scriptures herself, but enjoined it as a duty on all the members of her community.¹²⁷ The rule of St. Pachomius, which St. Jerome had translated for the guidance of the religious, served also to stimulate the literary endeavors of these saintly women. Here in particular we note the special benefit that a community of women might derive from the contiguity of a community of men, especially if the latter abounded in educational opportunities. This was eminently the case in the monastery at Bethlehem. There was St. Jerome, the "Doctor Maximus," who was not only a master in the Scriptures, but ranked still higher in the spiritual life as a director of souls. Under his wise direction, St. Paula governed her community of women with so much discretion and ability that the fame of it, spread abroad by pilgrims who visited the Holy Land, awakened a great desire in women, even in distant countries, to join her band of virgins. The literary studies which St. Jerome had so greatly promoted in the school of St. Marcella, while at Rome, of which St. Paula had been the brightest ornament, were continued under his direction at Bethlehem. Indeed, Paula and Eustochium cited the literary advantages that they enjoyed as an inducement to persuade St. Marcella to join them in the Land of Promise.¹²⁸ But this noble Roman matron preferred to sacrifice these advantages in favor of the saintly widows and virgins who had placed themselves under her direction and tutorship.¹²⁹

The double monastic system spread with the expansion of monasticism, although ecclesiastical legislation was early concerned with its suppression. Canon 28 of the synod held at Agde, in 506, forbade the erection of convents for women in the neighborhood of monasteries for men, "because of the cunning of satan and people's gossip." From the enactments of Justinian we observe that double monasteries were numerous in the East, but that they were looked upon with disfavor. In spite of the unfavorable attitude assumed by Church and State towards double monasteries they multiplied rapidly in Gaul, Britain and

¹²⁷ "Nec licebat cuiquam sororum ignorare psalmos, et non de Scripturis sanctis quotidie aliquid dicere." S. Hieron., Ep. CVIII. *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 896.

¹²⁸ Ep. XLVI. Paula et Eustochium ad Marcellam. *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 483 ss.

¹²⁹ Campbell, "Virgins Consecrated to God in Rome during the First Centuries." *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, XXV, 786 ff.

later in Germany. Opinion is divided as to the existence of double monasteries in Ireland. Montalembert asserts, on the authority of M. Varin,¹³⁰ that they "were more popular in Ireland than anywhere else, where they sprang up spontaneously from the beginning of the conversion of the island."¹³¹ According to Miss Bateson's scholarly treatise, however, only the existence of the double monastery of Kildare can be definitely proved.¹³² Still, it seems certain that other monasteries of this type existed, both from the fact of the "clan-type organization" of monastic institutions found in Ireland during the early days of Christianity, and because Irish monks seem to have greatly promoted the establishment of double monasteries on the continent.

That double monasteries existed in Gaul at an early date seems probable. Ste. Croix at Poitiers, for instance, appears to have been a monastery of this type. But only after the arrival of St. Columban and his Irish disciples double monasteries increased rapidly in Gaul. "As a result of their influence, a large number of monasteries were founded, and among them were some of the largest and most famous double monasteries."¹³³ Brie, Chelles and Andelys, to which English princesses and ladies were sent for their education, belong to this group of Columbian foundations. "In Gaul after the strong revival of the seventh century the double monastery fell into decay."¹³⁴ It was definitely and successfully revived by Robert of Arbrissel at the beginning of the twelfth century.¹³⁵

In England, double monasteries "began in the second half of the seventh century, and ceased to exist in the eighth."¹³⁶ Gilbert of Sempringham, in founding the Order of the Gilbertines, revived the institution in the first half of the twelfth century in England as Robert of Arbrissel had done in France by founding the Order of Fontevraud.¹³⁷ Germany developed them in the eighth century; "Ireland had one, Kildare, in the eighth, whether any that were earlier is very doubtful; in Spain, where the family mon-

¹³⁰ *Mémoire sur les causes de la dissidence entre l'Eglise bretonne et l'Eglise romaine. Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres*, 175 ff. Paris, 1858.

¹³¹ *Monks of the West*, II, 696.

¹³² *Op. cit.*, 165 ff.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 149.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 150.

¹³⁵ Cf. Heimbucher, I, 417 ff.

¹³⁶ Bateson, *loc. cit.*

¹³⁷ Cf. Graham, *op. cit.* Heimbucher, II, 30.

astery existed in the seventh century, the fullest development came in the second half of the ninth century."¹³⁸

If the origin of double monasteries must be attributed, at least in part, to the desire of founders to procure for religious women the spiritual aids and services of the neighboring community of men, the refusal of the holy abbots to undertake the charge of the nuns early reversed the conditions. "From this fact, no doubt, arose the singular custom universally established from the seventh century, not in Ireland, . . . but in all the Irish colonies, of two united communities, placed, not the nuns under the rule of an ecclesiastic, but the monks under that of the abbess of their neighboring nuns."¹³⁹ The purpose, therefore, of the double monastery remained unchanged. The communities of regular priests were established in the vicinity of the monasteries of nuns, for the performance of the spiritual functions of the monastery and the direction of the religious. In most of the great nunneries in Gaul and England a monastery of clerks or priests was placed "at the gates of the community of nuns, and ruled by their abbess."¹⁴⁰ That the community of clerks or priests, thus joined to a community of nuns, were charged also with the instruction of the religious, is evident from the life of St. Cædmon: "Erat eo tempore monasteriis feminarum, amplis præsertim ac numerosis, conjuncta virorum, qui iis sacra administrarent, et familiam reliquam erudirent."¹⁴¹

A similar arrangement prevailed generally in the institutions of canonesses. Usually they were the canons, canonici, called clerici, or fratres in earlier times, who performed the spiritual functions for the canonesses.¹⁴² The *Regula Sanctimonialium* prescribes that the dwellings of the canons and their church be outside the enclosure of the monastery.¹⁴³ The right of admitting canons into the chapter belonged to the abbess. It seems that, in course of time, the chapters of some institutions had acquired the privilege of choosing a successor to a vacant canonicate and that the abbess simply approved the choice made. The capellanus abbatissæ conferred the canonicate, as the delegate of the abbess, on the canon appointed or elected. The canon invested

¹³⁸ Bateson, ut supra.

¹³⁹ Montalembert, II, 693.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., loc. cit.

¹⁴¹ Quoted by Montalembert, II, 693.

¹⁴² Schäfer, 96.

¹⁴³ Cap. XXVII. *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 971 s.

took a solemn oath promising to obey the bishop, the abbess and the chapter, to observe the statutes and customs of the institution and to promote the interests of his church.¹⁴⁴ It appears that in some instances, if the institution happened to be located near a parish church, an oath of submission to the rector of the parish church was also required.¹⁴⁵

The functions of canons, attached to the institutions of canonesses, included, besides the spiritual ministrations to the canonesses, and the choir duties, also the pastoral duties for the laity in the church of the institution and all other dependent churches and chapels. Since the territory in possession of these institutions was frequently very extensive, parish functions constituted a considerable part of the activity of canons. At times the parish service was transferred from the church of the canonesses to one or more neighboring churches; the church of the institution being reserved for the exclusive use of the canonesses and their immediate dependents. This was the case in the institutions of canonesses at Cologne, Essen, Vreden, Neuss and Quedlinburg, among others. The parish service, in the church of the institution, was in charge and under the direction of the provost. From the eleventh century onward, it was frequently the capellanus abbatissæ who performed the parish service.¹⁴⁶

Canons attached to the institutions of canonesses conducted also, regularly, a school for boys, as the canonesses did for girls. The schools for boys served, in the first place, for the education of the clergy of the neighboring country and the members of the canonicate. Boys, however, who did not intend to enter the priesthood were also admitted. The importance of the school and its educational curriculum varied with the rank of the church in the diocese, and the existing provisions for the education of the clergy. Sometimes the school was a simple parish school, as for instance, the schools of the three institutions of canonesses at Cologne, which the canons conducted at the smaller annex-churches. But even in these, candidates for the priesthood, sometimes, completed their education.¹⁴⁷ In most institutions we find a canon, the "canonicus scholasticus,"

¹⁴⁴ Schäfer, 103.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 95.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 107 ff.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 116, note 4.

or "rector scholarum," as he was originally called, in charge of the boys' school.¹⁴⁸

The educational advantages arising from such arrangements for communities of women can easily be seen. The observation of Specht, for communities of nuns or canonesses, subordinated to the abbot of monks or canons, may be regarded as true generally as far as double monasteries are concerned, even when conditions were reversed: "Wherever monasteries of nuns and monks, of canonesses and canons were joined or located near each other, and the former were subject to the latter, the abbot or provost entrusted the care of the women, as a rule, to a priest, the *custos dominarum*, who devoted himself to their direction and the performance of the sacred functions. At times he also directed the education of girls, especially when no suitable mistresses were at hand."¹⁴⁹

Among the earliest institutions of religious women in the West, which derived thus educational advantages from the double monastic system, the monastery of St. Radegund ranks first in importance and the order of time. The poet and scholar Fortunatus is said to have joined the community of men because of his high esteem for the noble qualities and scholarly accomplishments of St. Radegund. Having received Holy Orders, he devoted himself to the direction of her community as *capellanus monialium*. That St. Radegund and her community profited educationally from their relations with the poet is evident from the eagerness with which St. Radegund seized every opportunity to instruct herself and her religious. Baudonivia, a contemporary and a religious of the community, tells us in her biography of the saint, that whenever an ecclesiastic happened to come to the monastery, she invariably made use of the opportunity to inquire whether there was anything that she could improve in her way of serving God. And if, perchance, she learned anything new from him, she immediately tried, zealously, to put it into practice; only after that she taught her community by word what she exhibited by example. And so each day she instructed them, taking care that they should understand what she taught them, so that none could plead ignorance as an excuse.¹⁵⁰

The education of these religious was not confined to spiritual

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 115 ff.

¹⁴⁹ Specht, 275.

¹⁵⁰ *Mon. Germ. Hist., Scr., Rer. Merov.*, II, 383 s.

knowledge, since they were occupied not only with the copying of manuscripts, and learned the Psalter by heart, but presented also small dramas.¹⁵¹ They did not consider it unsuitable to their calling to busy themselves even with the composition of popular songs. It is related, that on one occasion, certain songs composed by one of the religious were sung to the music of stringed instruments by a crowd of people dancing beyond the convent walls. Delighted at her success, the religious hastened to St. Radegund to apprise her of the fact. She not only refrained from chiding the religious for the worldly spirit that might have been attributed to her, but commended her accomplishment, remarking, however, that as to herself she no longer had an ear for worldly songs.¹⁵² The secular studies of the religious give evidence of the active influence of the poet Fortunatus. Undoubtedly he was the teacher of the nuns in the study of poetry. St. Radegund herself was a zealous student of the writings of the Fathers. Fortunatus tells us that she read the writings of St. Gregory Nazianzus, of St. Basil, St. Athanasius, St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, of Sedulius and Orosius.¹⁵³

The monastery of St. Radegund presents conditions which, undoubtedly, were ideal for the time and environment of which we are speaking. Yet it seems probable that similar conditions prevailed in most institutions favored in a like manner, i. e., such as were governed by, or possessed, some influential member of literary qualifications and enterprising character. In such instances we might expect to find the educationally ideal conditions and the best achievements that the time could produce, it being always understood that the adverse fortunes of war, social unrest and political upheavals did not seriously interfere with the temporal prosperity of the institutions.

Of the great double monasteries that existed in Gaul during the seventh century, and which have been classed as canonical institutions,¹⁵⁴ Remiremont holds an important place. Here St.

¹⁵¹ Heimbucher, I, 201.

¹⁵² Bernoulli, *Die Heiligen der Merovinger*, 86. Tübingen, 1900.

¹⁵³ Cujus sunt epulae quicquid pia regula pandit,
Quicquid Gregorius Basilisque docent,
Acer Athanasius, quod lenis Hilarius edunt,
Quos causae sociis lux tenet una duos.
Quod tonat Ambrosius, Hieronymus atque coruscet
Sive Augustinus fonte fluente rigat.
Sedulius dulcis quod Orosius edit acutus,
Regula Caesarii linea nata sibi est.

Carm. lib. VII. Quoted by Denk, *Geschichte des Gallo-Fränkischen Unterrichts- und Bildungswesens*, 264. Mainz, 1892.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Schäfer, 70 ff.

Amatus instituted the *laus perennis*. He divided the nuns into seven groups, of twelve in each group, and assigned to them the Church of St. Peter, in which they kept up the perpetual Psalmody. Mactefled was the first abbess of the nuns and St. Amatus governed the community of monks. Although the house of the nuns was the more important one, St. Amatus, as abbot, exercised also disciplinary powers over the nuns and busied himself with their instruction. Leading the life of a hermit most of the time, he yet came out of his retreat every Sunday to read the Holy Scriptures either with the sisters or the brethren.¹⁵⁵ The fact that St. Amatus, as a Columban monk, must have been well acquainted with the literary traditions of Irish monastic life, and the importance that he attached to the Divine Office, as a former monk of Agaune, lend particular value to the summary notice of his Scripture lessons with the nuns.

St. Salaberga established her monastery at Laon about 640 and instituted in it the *laus perennis* according to the pattern of Agaune and Remiremont. The monasteries of the men and women appear not to have been contiguous, but it is evident that Salaberga governed both. Her biographer speaks in highest praise of the virtues exhibited by the saint, comparing her discretion and zeal in the "regular observance" to that of St. Melania, daughter of Marcellinus. Salaberga was succeeded in the office of abbess by St. Anstrude, her daughter, who was famous for her knowledge and teaching. Baldwin, her brother, superintended the temporal affairs of the monastery.¹⁵⁶

The royal abbey of Chelles (Cala) ranks with Jouarre, Brie and Andelys as one of the foremost educational institutions of the seventh century. It was founded, or rather refounded, by Queen Balthilde in 662, upon a foundation attributed to St. Clotilde. The early literary fame of this institution was due in great part to St. Bertile, whom St. Balthilde brought from Jouarre to rule over her house at Chelles. So renowned was this double monastery for its excellent discipline and learning that, according to tradition, Anglo-Saxon kings sought and obtained from the holy abbess a colony of monks and nuns to establish similar institutions in England.¹⁵⁷ Among the religious

¹⁵⁵ Bateson, 152, Hélyot, op. cit., VI, 402 ff.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Bateson, 154 f.; *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., Rer. Merov., 44 s.; *Hist. Litt. de la France*, 111, 444.

¹⁵⁷ Bateson, 156.

of this community were numbered later two daughters of Charlemagne, Gisela and Rietrude. History has preserved their names among the pupils of Alcuin, together with those of two other princesses, a daughter of Thasillon and Columba, a princess of the English nation. "Elles assisterent régulièrement aux leçons du maître, avec leur abbesse, les fils de l'Empereur, des pontifes, des moines et de gens de la Cour."¹⁵⁸

The largest group of double monasteries was in Belgium, several of which became famous institutions of canonesses. In Marchienne, which had been founded by St. Amand, the monastery of monks was governed by Jonatus, that of the nuns by St. Rietrude. The neighboring house of Hamage, also a double monastery, was closely connected with that of Marchienne. After the death of St. Gertrude, foundress of the institution, and mother-in-law of St. Rietrude, Eusebia, the second daughter of St. Rietrude, succeeded to the government of the monastery. Eusebia was only twelve years old when she was chosen successor to her grandmother, and was attending school at Hamage at the time of her grandmother's death.¹⁵⁹

In the diocese of Cambrai-Arras monasteries were particularly numerous during the Merovingian period. Among them we find two famous canonical institutions, whose relations to each other resembled those existing between Marchienne and Hamage. Maubeuge, founded by St. Aldegonde, was the more important of the two and was apparently one of those monasteries which were specially interested in the education of children.¹⁶⁰ The canonesses of Mons recognized St. Waudru as their foundress. St. Aldegonde, sister of St. Waudru, was succeeded successively by her two nieces, Aldetrude and Amalberta, daughters of St. Waudru, who had received their education at Maubeuge, under St. Aldegonde.

Another pair of double monasteries, governed by two sisters, though in this case not contemporaneously, was Nivelles and Andenne, in the ancient diocese of Liege. The territory in which these convents were located formed in ancient times parts of lower Germany and came early under the influence of Roman civilization. Already by the middle of the fourth century it

¹⁵⁸ Torchet, *op. cit.*, I, 60.

¹⁵⁹ Essen, *Etude Critique et Littéraire sur les Vitae des Saints Merovingiens de l' Ancienne Belgique*, 260 f. Louvain, 1907; Bateson, 156 f.; Hucbaldus, *Vita S. Rietrudis, Abbatissae Marcianensis*. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXII, 843.

¹⁶⁰ *Vita S. Aldegundis*. *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., Rer. Merov., VI, 88.

was provided with regular episcopal administration. The material prosperity, destroyed by the invasions of the barbarians, from the third to the fifth centuries, reappeared under some members of the Pepin family, who owned extensive tracts of territory in Hesbaye and the surrounding country. On one of these large estates, Itta or Iduberga, wife of Pepin of Landen, after the death of her husband, in 640, founded the institution of Nivelles. Gertrude, her daughter, a virgin consecrated to God, was then fourteen years old. By the advice of St. Amand Itta retired with her daughter into this monastery. They organized the new foundation, sent messengers to Rome for relics and Lives of the Saints, and Gertrude took there the veil with other French girls. For the celebration of the Divine service and the instruction of the religious, they obtained some priests from Ireland. The monastery of Nivelles was, therefore, from the beginning under Irish discipline. Near the community of women was located a community of religious men, for the spiritual services of the community, the abbess ruling the whole establishment. The educational fame of the institution was chiefly connected with the life and work of St. Gertrude, who succeeded her mother as abbess of the monastery. In this chapter, as in a number of others, of both sexes, the canonesses formed the more important part of the institution.¹⁶¹ Andenne was founded by St. Begga, sister of St. Gertrude, about thirty-three years after the death of the latter. In imitation of the seven churches of Rome she erected seven churches on the monastery grounds. From the abbess of Nivelles she obtained not only a number of saintly religious, to lay the foundation of the religious life in the institution, but also relics of St. Gertrude and books for the instruction of the religious. The organization of this institution was evidently modeled after that of Nivelles.¹⁶²

St. Mary's of Soissons, also an important canonical institution of the earlier type, became influential in determining the character of the celebrated institution of canonesses at Herford. In 838 a certain Tetta became abbess of Herford, "who came from Soissons and regulated the settlement at Herford on the plan

¹⁶¹ Cf. Bateson, 185; Essen, I f.; Rettberg, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, I, 564. Göttingen, 1846.

¹⁶² Hélyot, VI, 437 f.; Rettberg, I, 565.

of the house she had left.”¹⁶³ St. Mary’s of Soissons was founded by Ebroin, Mayor of the Palace of Neustria, and his wife, Leodutruide; both became members of the institution. “The first Abbess of St. Mary’s came from Jouarre, and the monastery adhered to the arrangements for divine service followed at Luxeuil, jointly with the Rule of St. Benedict.”¹⁶⁴ This monastery was also under Irish influence. An Irish monk named Wodoalus and his companion were placed in charge of a little hospice at the gates of the monastery. That educational work was conducted at this institution is evidenced by the treatise *De partu virginis* which Paschacius Radbertus, Abbot of Corbey, addressed to the abbess of Soissons, “in which he speaks of himself as their pupil, and says that he has written the work to show how much he loves them.”¹⁶⁵

This short account of some of the main features of double monasteries during the Merovingian period might be much extended and amplified. Yet what has been said has pointed out sufficiently certain influences which fostered intellectual activity and educational enterprises in double monasteries. It is a noteworthy fact that the flourishing period of double monasteries in Gaul coincided with that of feminine eminence in learning. Moreover, feminine culture itself, apparently, shifted with the movement from Gaul to England and from thence to Germany. So that, if Mr. Varin’s conclusions regarding the origin and spread of double monasteries cannot be actually credited for want of positive proofs,¹⁶⁶ there are, nevertheless, many valuable suggestions offered for an interesting and profitable investigation.

Miss Bateson’s learned monograph on double monasteries evidently disposes of the question in Ireland, as far as facts are concerned.¹⁶⁷ That Ireland’s women shared in the intense intellectual activity of the sixth and seventh centuries seems beyond doubt. They were not debarred from learning by the ancient Brehon code of laws and Christianity would not abrogate a right which it tried to strengthen and uphold elsewhere. From incidental notices we learn, for instance, that women were ordinarily provided with writing utensils. Mention is made of a

¹⁶³ Eckenstein, 147; cf. Schäfer, 96, note 2.

¹⁶⁴ Bateson, 160.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 161.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Bateson, 137 ff.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 165 ff.

British princess "who attended Mo-Nenni's school at the Magnum Monasterium, probably Candida Casa. A certain virgin named Lassar in the sixth century is said to have been placed under the charge of St. Finian of Clonard to be taught, and then under St. Kieran of Clonmacnoise."¹⁶⁸ We are further informed that an Irish saint of the First Order named Mugint "founded a school in Scotland, to which girls as well as boys were admitted to study, and St. Ita enjoins her foster-son, St. Brendan, when a young man, not to study with women lest some evil-disposed person might revile him."¹⁶⁹ Monastic learning in Ireland was, therefore, accessible to women, even if it cannot be shown that it reached them directly through the medium of double monasteries.

In England, double monasteries flourished from the middle of the seventh to about the middle of the eighth century. Among the first and most important to be pointed out are those of St. Hilda at Hartlepool, and Whitby, modeled after the pattern of Hartlepool, her first foundation. At Whitby, as at Hartlepool, the inmates were to live "after the example of the primitive Church," "according as she had learned it from learned men, in particular from Bishop Aidan."¹⁷⁰ Thus we see that the first double monasteries in England came under the direct influence of the Irish School. This statement of the Venerable Bede would seem to corroborate the testimony of Allemand and the Rev. R. Butler, among others, who assert, probably, as much on the authority of Sir James Ware, as on original evidence, that early monastic institutions in Ireland and England were of the canonical type.¹⁷¹ So zealously were the sacred studies cultivated in this monastery that many could be found, worthily prepared, to enter the priesthood. The Venerable Bede names six scholars of this monastery who filled episcopal sees for the most part outside the kingdom. "The career of these men shows that the system of discipline and education under Hilda at Whitby compared favourably with that of other settlements."¹⁷² "Besides the poems of Caedmon, at least one Latin work shows that Whitby was a centre of literary activity. It is now known that

¹⁶⁸ Bateson, 169 f.

¹⁶⁹ Joyce, *Social History of Ancient Ireland*, I, 410. London, 1903.

¹⁷⁰ Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, Bk. IV, ch. 23; Eckenstein, 90; Bateson, 170.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Allaria, "Canons and Canonesses Regular." *Catholic Encyclopedia*, III, 290 f.

¹⁷² Eckenstein, 91.

the earliest extant authority for the biography of Pope Gregory I was written by a Whitby monk."¹⁷³

Other important double monasteries of this period, notable as educational centers, were the monasteries of Barking and Wimborne. St. Aldhelm appears to have been specially connected with the monastery of Barking. In his treatise on Virginité, which abounds in educational information, he speaks of the nunnery of this convent as a world within a world, "where the nuns work like bees. Their industry is not confined to the reading of sacred literature; the liberal arts and secular scholarship are taught. . . . The nuns know all the discipline of monastic conversation and the regular institutes of monasteries, but he speaks of the rule of St. Benedict as the rule to which he himself is subject."¹⁷⁴

Wimborne, the last and probably the most important of the well-authenticated monastic foundations made by women during the Anglo-Saxon period, is known to us chiefly through the life of St. Lioba, written by Rudolf, a monk of Fulda. The fame of Wimborne is closely connected with that of St. Lioba. It appears that Wimborne was not organized under the Benedictine Rule, for when St. Boniface contemplated the foundation of religious establishments for either sex, he sent Sturmi to Monte Cassino to learn its monastic discipline. "In pursuance of his plan," says the author of St. Lioba's life, "Boniface now arranged monastic routine and life according to accepted rule, and set Sturmi as Abbot over the monks and the virgin Lioba as spiritual mother over the nuns, and gave into her care a monastery at the place called Bischofsheim, where a considerable number of servants of God were collected together, who now followed the example of their blessed teacher, were instructed in divine knowledge, and so profited by her teaching that several of them in their turn became teachers elsewhere; for few monasteries of women (*monasteria fœminarum*) existed in those districts where Lioba's pupils were not sought as teachers."¹⁷⁵ From this account of St. Lioba's life we also learn that girls were educated at Wimborne. Her biographer says: "She grew up, so carefully tended by the abbess and the sisters, that she cared for naught but

¹⁷³ Bateson, 171.

¹⁷⁴ Bateson, 175.

¹⁷⁵ Vita, S. Leobae, c. 2. *Mon. Germ. Hist., Scr.*, XV, 126 (fol.); quoted by Eckenstein, 136.

the monastery and the study of holy writ. She was never pleased by irreverent jokes, nor did she care for the other maidens' senseless amusements; her mind was fixed on the love of Christ, and she was ever ready to listen to the word of God, or to read it, and to commit to memory what she heard and read to her own practical advantage."¹⁷⁶ A further notice, gleaned from this life, suggests the canonical type of an institution. In speaking of the arrangement of the monastery, Rudolf of Fulda tells us that there were two monasteries surrounded by lofty walls, one of which was for the clerks (i. e., canons), the other for females.¹⁷⁷

A survey of the chief characteristics of double monasteries in England shows that the early English double monasteries were more uniform in their organization than those of Gaul. It appears probable that, without exception, abbesses presided over all those that are known in England, and administered the property which the two sexes held in common. "It seems by no means improbable that in England all the houses for women were double in the first period of monasticism, for, wherever any detailed evidence is forthcoming, this character appears. There is no evidence that in England, as abroad, it was usual for each double monastery to have more than one church."¹⁷⁸ The discipline regarding the separation of the sexes was rigidly observed. Rudolf of Fulda says of the monastery of Wimborne: "No woman could obtain permission to come into the monastery of the men, nor any of the men to come into the convent of the women, with the exception of the priests who entered their churches to celebrate mass and withdrew to their own house the moment the service was over."¹⁷⁹

Very little is known of the earlier double monasteries of Germany. A tenth century biography of St. Fridolin, written by Balther (Walter), a monk of Säckingen,¹⁸⁰ suggests the existence of one at the time of St. Fridolin. The writer speaks of monks and nuns on the island and tells us that St. Fridolin occupied himself with the temporal concerns of the nuns. He is supposed to have organized there the canonical life of nuns.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁶ "Vita," ch. 7. Ibid., 124; Eckenstein, 135.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Bateson, 180. The presence of canons for the spiritual services of an institution of women has been regarded as a mark of an institution of canonesses. Schäfer, 13.

¹⁷⁸ Bateson, op. cit., 182.

¹⁷⁹ Quoted by Bateson, 180.

¹⁸⁰ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., Rer. Merov., III, 355 ss.

¹⁸¹ Schäfer, 72, note 11.

Pfalzel, near Trier, probably a Merovingian foundation, "was a double monastery under abbess Adela, who died 734."¹⁸² A better known double monastery was Heidenheim, founded by St. Wunibald about 751. This monastery was a seat of learning and culture in the midst of a wilderness. Walburga and her Anglo-Saxon nuns had brought the works of the Fathers with them and they read the writings of Gregory, as is evidenced by several quotations in the life of St. Wunibald. They listened with interest to the account of St. Willibald's travels in the Holy Land, and not long after one of their number attempted to write the life of the two brothers. After the death of St. Wunibald, his sister, St. Walburga, was left alone, superioress of the double monastery. The prosperity of this establishment ended with the death of the abbess.¹⁸³

Among the early religious settlements in the Rhine valley, Hohenburg held an important place. Very few trustworthy accounts of the early history of this institution have been transmitted. A tenth century life of St. Odilia, which forms the bulk of our information, is probably mostly legendary and unreliable. According to the author, who seemingly lived in the monastery of Hohenburg, St. Odilia was both the foundress and organizer of the canonical life.¹⁸⁴ St. Odilia is said to have presided over one hundred thirty sanctimoniales and to have been zealously occupied with their instruction and education.¹⁸⁵ The educational fame of the institution was due chiefly to Reglindis and Herrad, two abbesses of the twelfth century, famous for their literary accomplishments.¹⁸⁶ Herrad possessed, besides her literary abilities, considerable powers of management. As abbess she founded two houses of canons, at Trutenhausen and at St. Gorgon, not far from Hohenburg, who, in turn, performed the religious services for her community.¹⁸⁷

Of the institutions of canonesses in Saxony that attained renown as literary centers and educational institutions are Herford, Gandersheim, and Quedlinburg. Herford was organized by Tetta, one of its abbesses from St. Mary's of Soissons (838),

¹⁸² Bateson, 184.

¹⁸³ Hauck, I, 537 ff.; Bateson, 184 f.

¹⁸⁴ Cap. 14, 16. *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., Rer. Merov., VI, 44 ff.; Eckenstein, 239 f.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, cap. 13, 19.

¹⁸⁶ Rlindis seu Reglindis et Herradis Hohenburgensis Abbatissae, "Notitia et Fragmenta." Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXCIV, 1537 ss.; Wichner, "Das ehemalige Nonnenkloster O.S. B. zu Admont," in *Studien u. Mitteilungen aus dem Benedictiner Orden* (1881), II. Jahrg., I. Bd. 289.

¹⁸⁷ Eckenstein, 241.

on the model of the house from which she had come. Other institutions, Herzebrock and Freckenhorst, among others, were modeled in turn on that of Herford, so that its influence extended widely over Saxon lands. Herford was also renowned at an early date as an educational institution, and long maintained its reputation. Among its most influential pupils were numbered, in the ninth century, Hathumod, first abbess of Gandersheim; in the tenth, Mathilde, queen of Henry I.¹⁸⁸

Gandersheim, in several respects the most famous of the Saxon institutions of canonesses, was founded by Duke Liudolf and his pious wife Oda. Three of the founders' daughters—Hathumod, Gerberg and Christina—succeeded each other as abbesses of the institution and contributed much to the celebrity which it enjoyed. Though Gandersheim cannot be properly classed with double monasteries, we know from the life of Hathumod that there existed close relations between it and the neighboring monastery of Lammspringe. Hathumod in particular seems to have been guided much in the government of her community by the advice of her brother Agius, who was a monk of Lammspringe. The literary fame of Gandersheim culminated in the literary achievements of Hrotsuit.¹⁸⁹

"Two other important abbeys ruled by women in connection with royalty were Essen and Quedlinburg." Both institutions were important educational centers and were governed in the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries by several abbesses of high educational attainments. According to the general custom of canonical institutions, the religious functions were in charge of a community of canons. In Essen they numbered twenty, consisting of twelve priests, four deacons and four subdeacons, besides a large number of students with lower Orders. For Quedlinburg thirteen canons have been mentioned.¹⁹⁰

The double monastery flourished at no period in Italy, "but there are traces of the existence of a few houses for men and women under a common rule."¹⁹¹ In Spain, as early as the sixth century an isolated mention occurs "of an Abbess Hositia, 'abbess of a flock of monks.'" The second rule of St. Fructuosus,

¹⁸⁸ Dümmler, *Geschichte des Ostfränkischen Reiches*, Zweite Auflage, I, 367, 369. Leipzig, 1887; Schäfer, 73, note 9; Eckenstein, 147 f.; *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XXV, 40. Hathumoda von Gandersheim.

¹⁸⁹ Ebert, *Literatur des Mittelalters im Abendlande*, III, 312 f. Leipzig, 1887. Hathumoda von Gandersheim, op. cit., 47. Eckenstein, 154 ff.

¹⁹⁰ Schäfer, 96, 99, 177 f.; Eckenstein, 148 f.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Bateson, 188 f.

the so-called *Regula monastica communis*, which dates from the middle of the seventh century, offers most information on the relations that existed between the communities of monks and nuns in the double monasteries of Spain. It has for object the regulation of that particular form of a double monastery in which whole families organized their households on a monastic basis to secure for themselves the privileges and immunities of monastic institutions. The dwellings of monks and nuns of such a monastery were to "be kept well apart, and those monks who serve the nuns must be the few and the perfect, elected by the many; they must be men who have grown old in the monastery. They must so dwell in the monastery of girls that they may serve them as carpenters and do hospitality to brethren coming on visits. They must be watchful over the young of both sexes."¹⁹²

The double monastery was distinctly revived with the foundation of the Orders of Fontevraud, Prémontré and Sempringham. In the Order of Fontevraud, the men were divided into clerics and lay brothers, while the women were probably all professed nuns. The abbess of each double monastery governed both communities of clerics and nuns, and the abbess of the "great monastery" of Fontevraud was the superior general of the whole order.¹⁹³

Shortly after the foundation of Fontevraud by Robert of Arbrissel, St. Norbert established the first settlement of his order at Prémontré. The early monasteries of this order were at least in part double monasteries, but three years after the founder's death, in 1134, "the chapter at Prémontré decided that the women should be expelled from all the settlements that had inmates of both sexes, and that no nuns should henceforth be admitted to the settlements of men."¹⁹⁴ Still, double monasteries continued to be founded until about 1275, when the separation appears to have been completely effected.¹⁹⁵ "Besides the Choir-sisters, as the Canonesses were also called, there were lay sisters, whose duties and position in the convent correspond with those of the lay brothers in the monastery. Further, there were the Oblates, *Sorores Donatæ*, as they are still called. These were

¹⁹² Bateson, 192; Heimbucher, I, 203 f.

¹⁹³ Heimbucher, I, 417; Eckenstein, 193.

¹⁹⁴ Eckenstein, 195.

¹⁹⁵ Heimbucher, II, 84.

free to communicate with the outside world, and their vows were only temporary."¹⁹⁶

The order of Sempringham was founded by St. Gilbert about 1135. Like that of Robert of Arbrissel, he took great interest in the feminine branch of the order, but he differed from the latter by assigning the general management of affairs to the superior of the canons. Gilbert himself founded nine double monasteries of the order and four for canons only. "The curious concluding institute of the Rule, which limited the numbers in each house, provided for twice as many women as men in the double monasteries."¹⁹⁷ The canons observed the Rule of St. Augustine, the nuns that of St. Benedict, "following in every way the custom of the canons." "Girls were admitted into the company of the nuns at the age of twelve, but several years passed before they could be enrolled among the novices. At the age of twenty the alternative was put before the novice of joining the nuns or the lay-sisters. If she decided in favor of the latter she could not afterwards be promoted to the rank of a nun; she was bound to observe chastity and obedience while she remained in the house, but she was not consecrated. A certain amount of knowledge of the hymns, psalms and books of service was required from the novice before she could make profession."¹⁹⁸

4. Relations with the Nobility

The history of the institutions of canonesses is intimately connected with that of many noble and royal families. The perusal of any list of foundations, sufficiently detailed, as that given by K. H. Schäfer, in the work already frequently quoted, reveals the important fact that these institutions generally owed their existence to the charitable enterprises of some member belonging to a royal or noble house. While bishops, for the most part, were responsible for the establishment of canonries on cathedral or collegiate churches, they are not frequently credited with the foundation of institutions of canonesses. The reason for this apparent indifference seems obvious.

In the first place, institutions of canonesses were regarded, from the time that monastic life had assumed a definite form, with little favor on the part of the Church. They did not repre-

¹⁹⁶ Hélyot, VI, 437 f.

¹⁹⁷ Graham, 40.

¹⁹⁸ Eckenstein, 217.

sent, in the mode of life instituted in them, the ideal of evangelical perfection in as perfect a form as monastic institutions did. Hence the Church discouraged rather than approved the foundation of such institutions, particularly when their secular character came to predominate. Secondly, the necessary endowment for an institution of canonesses could not always be readily provided for by the bishop; for the support of the canons a much smaller allotment sufficed, as they obtained considerable support from their parish work. A third reason would seem to have been the particular favor with which these institutions must have been regarded by the nobility. The freer, less exclusive life of canonesses would naturally be more in accord with their ideas of the life for which they frequently destined their own children.

As founders of religious institutions, persons of princely and noble rank enjoyed the rights and privileges accorded to monastic founders generally. They provided not only the means of subsistence by liberal donations and endowments, but concerned themselves about the organization of the institution, taking all precautions possible to insure to it stability as well as spiritual and temporal prosperity. To secure the spiritual well-being of the inmates, they endeavored to establish the institution on the pattern of communities renowned for regular observance. For this purpose they secured at times members experienced in the religious life from other institutions to form the nucleus of their own foundation. At other times they entrusted the government of the institution to religious noted for their fervent religious life and abilities for governing. Again, they sent a daughter, sister or other person whom they wished to entrust with the government of the institution to some establishment of renown to be trained in monastic discipline, before they assumed the charge of the institution. Thus, for instance, St. Begga, sister of St. Gertrude of Nivelles, procured a number of saintly religious from that institution to lay the foundations of the religious life in her foundation at Andenne.¹⁹⁹ Queen Balthilde called from Jouarre St. Bertile, who obtained great fame as a teacher, to undertake the government of her establishment at Chelles.²⁰⁰ St. Cæsarius sent his sister Cæsaria to Marseilles to learn in

¹⁹⁹ Hélyot, VI, 437 f.

²⁰⁰ Torchet, 44, 46.

the convent established by Cassian the monastic discipline observed there, before he instituted her abbess of his convent at Arles.²⁰¹ Liudolf and Oda, descendants of the noblest Saxon and Frankish lines, sent their daughter Hathumod to the famous institution of Herford to be trained in the observance of the monastic rule. She became afterwards the first abbess of Gandersheim, which her parents had founded.²⁰²

To secure the permanency and stability of an institution, founders used all the precautions and foresight possible to prevent future impediments and obstacles. Most frequently they secured their purpose by means of special privileges, usually in the form of immunities and exemptions, which they obtained from ecclesiastical and civil authority. The special privileges procured by St. Cæsarius for the convent at Arles are especially noteworthy. Fearing unlawful interference in the conventual affairs of the community he had established, the saint used in the first place his right of founder and ordained in his rules that the abbess and religious should resist vigorously any attempt on part of the episcopacy to change or modify the organization of the life instituted by him. This measure, however, seemed not sufficient to the holy founder to insure the autonomy of the institution. He solicited further from Pope Hormisdas exemption from episcopal authority by placing the institution under the immediate control and protection of the Holy See.²⁰³

The example of St. Cæsarius found many imitators throughout the early Middle Ages. Within a few decades St. Radegund, under similar apprehensions, first introduced the Rule of St. Cæsarius into her community at Poitiers and after that she sought and obtained from the bishops, assembled in a synod at Poitiers, the assurance of their protection. This procedure of St. Radegund created a very advantageous precedent.²⁰⁴ The first definitely authentic exemption recorded seems to have been that granted by Gregory I to a community of women founded in honor of St. Cassian at Marseilles. This pope may be regarded as the principal author of exemptions. "In releasing the great communities of Gaul and Italy in various essential points from episcopal jurisdiction, he evidently had in view only to

²⁰¹ Heimbucher, I, 200.

²⁰² *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, Leben der Abtissin Hathumoda von Gandersheim, XXV, 40 f.

²⁰³ Malnory, 271 f.

²⁰⁴ Besse, *Les Moines de l' Ancienne France*, 166 ff.

fortify them in spiritual life, and to form so many centers of energetic resistance against the disorders which the different invasions and struggles of diverse races among themselves had made frequent in the ranks of the secular clergy."²⁰⁵ From the ninth to the eleventh century papal letters of protection appeared mostly in the form of an acceptance of a dedication, donation or submission, in short, of a commendation to the Roman Church of an institution to be protected. The Church gained thereby a certain overlordship, a certain sovereign right over institutions which sought her protection. According to feudal fashion the latter paid in return a small annual or quint-annual fee. This feudal phase of protection receded in the twelfth century, when papal letters, thus issued, had reached the highest number.²⁰⁶ Among the institutions of canonesses placed under the immediate jurisdiction of the Holy See were the chapters of Avesnes in the diocese of Arras,²⁰⁷ Bouxières-aux-Dames in the diocese of Nancy,²⁰⁸ the royal chapter of Bourbourg in Flanders,²⁰⁹ Andlau in the diocese of Strassburg,²¹⁰ and Ottmarsheim in the diocese of Bale.²¹¹

The institutions of canonesses were not alone noble in their origin, but they developed early that aristocratic character about which James of Vitry in the early part of the thirteenth century reproachfully remarks that the rank of a person is so highly valued by them that only daughters of knights and nobles can hope to be received into these institutions.²¹² Some of them seem, indeed, to have been destined from the beginning exclusively for girls of noble rank. At the time of St. Radegund's death the convent Ste. Croix de Poitiers numbered two hundred religious, who were without exception daughters of Frankish nobility. Quedlinburg was destined from the beginning only for daughters of the highest nobility. Meschede never admitted any girls except such whose father and mother belonged to the nobility. A statute of Andenne, in 1207, ordained that no canoness should be received into the chapter unless she and her parents

²⁰⁵ Montalembert, 1, 397 f.

²⁰⁶ Scherer, *Handbuch des Kirchenrechtes*, 11, 740. Leipzig, 1898.

²⁰⁷ Ducas, 13.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 25.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 104.

²¹² "Hæc siquidem adeo personas accipiunt, quod non nisi filias militum et nobilium in suo collegio volunt recipere, religioni et morum nobilitati sæculi nobilitatem preferentes." *Historia occidentalis*, c. 31.

belonged to the nobility.²¹³ This requirement in institutions of canonesses came to be so rigid in the later Middle Ages that in many instances a formal proof of ancestral nobility was demanded for admission. Elaborate genealogical tablets had often to be presented by the candidate and the proofs of nobility were judged by dukes and barons of the Empire. The chapter of Alix in the diocese of Lyons required, accordingly, eight degrees on the paternal side, including the present, and three on the maternal, the present being the fourth.²¹⁴ At Epinal the candidate had to give proof of nine generations of nobility on both sides.²¹⁵ The statutes of Essen, finally, demanded sixteen degrees of ancestral descent.²¹⁶

This feature of institutions of canonesses seems comprehensible when it is remembered how, according to the customary right of founders, to select or appoint the head of the institution, the government frequently remained for generations in the family of the founders. Instances of this kind are very numerous. St. Radegund made use of it by appointing Agnes, a girl whom she had adopted and raised with motherly affection, abbess of her foundation at Poitiers;²¹⁷ St. Salaberga, foundress of St. John-Baptist at Laon,²¹⁸ appointed her daughter, St. Anstrude, as her successor in the government of the institution;²¹⁹ St. Rictrude was succeeded by her eldest daughter, Clotesinde, at Marchienne,²²⁰ while Eusebia, her second daughter, followed her grandmother Gertrude in the government of the neighboring institution of Hamage;²²¹ St. Aldegonde, foundress of Maubeuge, was succeeded successively by Aldetrude and Amalberta, her nieces.²²² At Nivelles, St. Itta appointed as her successor her daughter, St. Gertrude, who in turn was succeeded by her niece, Wulfentrude.²²³ The same observations may be made for the succeeding centuries. Among the most noteworthy instances, must be mentioned Gandersheim, of which the first three abbesses—Hathumod, Gerberg and Christine—were daughters of the founders, Liudolf and Oda. All three “were amongst the

²¹³ Cf. Heimbucher, I, 201; Schäfer, 235 f.

²¹⁴ Ducas, 7.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 57.

²¹⁶ Schäfer, 237.

²¹⁷ Heimbucher, I, 201; Eckenstein, 55; Besse, *Les Moines de l' Ancienne France*, 179.

²¹⁸ Besse, ut supra, 277.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 383.

²²⁰ Vita S. Rietrudis. *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXII, 834.

²²¹ *Op. cit.*, 843 ff.

²²² Essen, 237, 241.

²²³ Rettberg, I, 564.

most zealous advocates of culture and civilizing influences in Saxony during the ninth century."²²⁴ In the royal institution of Quedlinburg, Mathilde, daughter of Otto I, was followed as abbess by Adelheid, daughter of Otto II.²²⁵

Under conditions such as these, it is not surprising that many institutions of canonesses readily secured royal patronage and favor. Feudal customs, which regulated so frequently the relations of these institutions with the Holy See, came to be of much greater significance when circumstances brought them in contact with temporal power. Under its auspices abbesses became at times princesses of the Empire, with the duties and privileges entailed by such. Thus they ruled cities, even provinces, under royal or noble overlordship; furnished, vassal-like, their contingents to the regular army in time of war, and even took part, at times, in the national diets. In many respects these abbesses were, during feudal times, even more powerful and influential than the queenly and noble abbesses of early Anglo-Saxon England.

As evidence of these facts may be cited the privileges of several chapters of canonesses, whose relations with temporal power are particularly striking. The abbess of Avesnes, for example, possessed seignorial rights over the city of Bapaume, in signification of which she was handed the keys of the city by the magistrate on her first entry there. This privilege of the abbess, with others of an ecclesiastical nature, were confirmed by Honorius II, Innocent II, Eugenius III and Alexander III.²²⁶ The canonesses of Maubeuge exercised similar authority over the city of Maubeuge and the territory belonging to it.²²⁷ The abbesses of Château-Châlon, in the diocese of Besançon,²²⁸ and Andlau²²⁹ were princesses of the Empire. Mons, under the protectorate of the Counts of Hainaut, likewise enjoyed great authority and prééminence in secular affairs.²³⁰ The abbesses of Niedermünster and Obermünster in Regensburg were princesses of the Empire, sent their deputies to the national assemblies, and furnished each, as their contingents for war, two knights and

²²⁴ Eckenstein, 159.

²²⁵ *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, "Die Jahrbücher von Quedlinburg," XXXVI, 20.

²²⁶ Ducas, 13.

²²⁷ Hélyot, VI, 436.

²²⁸ Ducas, 37.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

²³⁰ Hélyot, VI, 435.

six foot-soldiers.²³¹ Gandersheim numbered among its vassals princes of the House of Brunswick, of Saxony and Brandenburg. The abbesses of Herford, Gandersheim and Quedlinburg were also princesses of the Empire. Herford and Quedlinburg were represented at the diets of the Empire and furnished their contingents to the regular army.²³²

Although the nobility played such an important rôle in the institutions of canonesses, it could not, therefore, be concluded that it has always been thus. At least in the earlier types of canonical institutions this exclusiveness of character appears to have been less defined. Hagiographies generally emphasize the noble origin of saints and the vocations furnished by the rich, but that does not necessarily imply that the poorer classes appeared less frequently in the ranks of the religious. They furnished, on the contrary, a considerable supply, but recruitment from their ranks was less striking to public attention. It is indeed remarkable that so many children raised in the palaces of kings and nobles renounced the promising joys of life and submitted humbly to the austere rule of monastic life to serve Christ better. The high esteem in which the religious life was held induced, at times, whole families with their dependents to embrace the life of the cloister. It often happened that even slaves entered with their master or mistress the religious life and lived henceforth on a footing of perfect equality. St. Romaric, for example, embraced the religious life in his own foundation at Remiremont with a number of his slaves, and St. Salaberga associated with herself in the religious life maidens who had been her servants in the world.²³³ The latter fact is particularly noteworthy, since the community of St. Salaberga, numbering about three hundred nuns, was composed chiefly of maidens descended from the nobility of the Franks. It is also known that St. Balthilde devoted considerable resources to the liberation of slaves and afterwards exerted herself to facilitate their entrance into monasteries.²³⁴ These unfortunates always enlisted the greatest compassion on the part of the Church. In the vast correspondence of Gregory the Great, there is probably no letter more touching than that which he addressed to the

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 430.

²³² *Ibid.*, 444 ff.

²³³ Besse, *Les Moines de l' Ancienne France*, 336.

²³⁴ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., *Rer. Merov.*, II, 494; Besse, *op. cit.*, 337.

sub-deacon of the Roman Church in Campania in behalf of a young slave who wished to become a nun. He says: "I understand that the defensor Felix possesses a young woman called Catella, who seeks with tears and vehement desire to take the veil, but whose master will not permit her to assume it. Now I desire that you go to Felix and demand of him the soul of this girl: you shall pay him the price he wants, and send her here under the charge of competent persons, who will conduct her to a monastery. And do it speedily, that your delay may not put this soul in danger."²³⁵

What has been noted regarding the membership of institutions of canonesses may, probably, with as much reason, be said of the education of children in these institutions. Just as it is improbable that the schools of canons were confined to the education of boys of the nobility, so also the schools of the canonesses could hardly have been limited entirely to the instruction of noble maidens. This supposition seems to be borne out by the fact of the liberal provisions made by various institutions for the permanent support of girls and widows living in destitute circumstances.²³⁶ Besides, the practice of hospitality, the care of the poor and needy, enjoined by the rules, including, no doubt, frequently the care of orphan children, would seem to permit a favorable conclusion in this regard. Similar indications may be gathered from the lives of saintly founders and religious. If we note, for example, the reference in the life of St. Radegund by the poet Fortunatus, where the saint, still a young princess, is represented as gathering the ill-cared-for children from the streets, washing and feeding them and then leading them in procession to the church, the little ones singing psalms on the way, it seems difficult to believe that such charitable enterprises as the education of poor children would have been excluded from the pious practices of this noble queen when she was a religious.²³⁷ Very probably this is not an isolated instance. How often do we not find charity for the poor and unfortunate extolled in the lives of the saintly women of that period? Their death was mourned by the poor, often, no doubt, with as much reason as the virgins of St. Macrina's community bewailed with intensest grief the death of her whom they called mother and nurse.²³⁸

²³⁵ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, LXXVII, 637; quoted by Montalembert, I, 404.

²³⁶ Cf. Schäfer, 254 f.

²³⁷ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, LXXXVIII, 499; Bernoulli, 81.

²³⁸ S. Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of St. Macrina*, 60.

It is well known that ladies of the nobility enjoyed the advantages of a literary education more frequently than their noble brothers. It is often not so well known where or how they came in possession of a culture that seems remarkable for the period and circumstances under which they lived. If more records of the monasteries of women, and especially of those of canonesses, were available, we would probably find that the institutions of canonesses, because of their peculiarly favorable conditions, were in the first place the homes of culture and education for girls of noble rank.

CHAPTER III

SCOPE AND CHARACTER OF EDUCATION

1. *The Schools of Canonesses—Evidence*

Feminine eminence in the culture and learning of the Middle Ages is now generally admitted. The comparatively large number of saintly women in the cloister, distinguished equally for their virtue as the variety of knowledge which they possessed, and the many ladies of gentle birth frequently cited as examples of scholarly attainment, are ample proof that the learning of the age was not debarred from women. It proves definitely that the barriers set by pagan antiquity to the education of women had yielded to the civilizing and elevating influence of Christianity, and that woman had attained her rights as the companion and equal of man. The history of the education of women in the Middle Ages is not only an interesting, but a most significant chapter in the history of education. It must be admitted that the education which these women received was of a superior character, and that to acquire it their childhood and youth must have been spent in an intelligent environment where they received a careful and extended training. It is also clear that the training which they received must have been shared by their companions, and that in a certain sense it was common to all girls similarly situated and living under similar circumstances.

Particular studies in the history of education during the Middle Ages have thrown considerable light on the educational opportunities available to boys and young men not destined for the clerical state or the religious life; they have furnished also enlightening information on the education of women.¹ Historians like Specht, Jourdain and Rousselot, among others, have made the subject of feminine education in the Middle Ages either an

¹ Cf. McCormick, *Education of the Laity in the Early Middle Ages*. Washington, 1912. Maitre, *Les Ecoles Episcopales et Monastiques*, 258 ff.; Denk, *Geschichte des Gallo-Fränkischen Unterrichts- und Bildungswesens*, 170 ff., 263 ff.

integral part of their treatises or have devoted them to it entirely. Others again have sought to gather information from the literatures of different periods and countries, presenting the education of woman, as the medieval writer depicts it. Such treatises furnish valuable information, in as much as the medieval writer is generally believed to describe what he saw or was informed of personally. Important as our knowledge derived from these sources may be, there is still wanting satisfying information bearing directly on schools and school-activities. That schools existed, and that, particularly, in the monasteries of monks, as well as nuns, no one will attempt to deny; for evidence, though frequently very indirect, entirely disproves a contrary opinion. It seemed important for this treatise to collect the scattered notices that give evidence of educational activity in convents of religious and in particular of canonesses. Several instances have been pointed out in the preceding chapter and will be merely referred to; others, especially those not so well known and those remarkable for the influence they exerted, shall be treated at greater length where material is available.

France—The Sixth and Seventh Centuries

The earliest mention of a school of girls in a monastery, where also boys were instructed, is supposed to be that of St. Radegund at Poitiers, in the sixth century.² Another institution, like that of Poitiers of the canonical type, in which children were received for education, is that of Baume les Dames, or Palma monasterium, where St. Odilia was educated from infancy.³ Even if the biography from which we obtain this information is to a great extent legendary,⁴ the mention of her education in this institution would, nevertheless, point out educational activities of a date considerably ante-dating the writing of the biography. The existence of the school of Chelles, under the famous abbess St. Bertile, is well established. Besides the large number of young men and women that came from all parts of Britain to hear the lectures of St. Bertile,⁵ we know of two kings of the Franks that were educated in the institution; Dagobert III (711-715) was placed in charge of his grandmother, St. Balthilde,

² Schäfer, 172, note 2.

³ Vita S. Odiliae. *Mon. Germ. Hist., Scr., Rer. Merov., VI*, 40 s.; *Analecta Boll.*, XIII, 14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Commentary by W. Levison; 25 s.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Commentary on the Vita of St. Bertile, 97; Torchet, 48.

who had taken the veil under St. Bertile, and Theodoric IV (721-737).⁶ Of Dagobert III it is expressly said that he was instructed under the care of St. Balthilde in sacred literature and the divine law: "At illa fervens desiderio sancto, tradidit illum sacris litteris divinaque lege imbuendum."⁷ The two most famous princesses of the Anglo-Saxons educated at Chelles were Hereswida, daughter of Hereric, King of the Northumbrians, who became later the queen of East Anglia,⁸ and St. Mildred, renowned as abbess of Minster in the island of Thanet. The education of girls in the institution of canonesses of Munster Belise is also proved. In the *Translatio* of St. Landoald and his companions we read that St. Amalberga of Tamise was given as a girl—on the advise of St. Willibrord—to St. Landrade, foundress of Munster Belise, to be instructed in manners and letters (*moribus studiisque*).⁹ The tradition of St. Amalberga's education at Munster Belise was spread widely.¹⁰

That the related groups of Belgian institutions of canonesses kept schools for boys as well as girls seems also certain. For Nivelles it is definitely proved. It is generally known that St. Gertrude excelled as much in scholarly attainment as St. Bertile of Chelles. She was particularly interested in the education of the sisters of her institution. Not only did she devote herself to their instruction, but she procured for them books and teachers from abroad. The two brothers, Foillanus and Ultan, of the race of the Scots, are said to have instructed them in chant, poetry and Greek.¹¹ Among the pupils of this institution is mentioned Wulftrude, of whom it is said that she was reared by St. Gertrude from her earliest infancy.¹² Interesting evidence for the school of Maubeuge is found in the lives of several saints connected with that convent. From that of St. Aldegonde, the foundress, we learn that boys as well as girls were educated under the saint's direction. Anso, the biographer of St. Ursmarus, the little nephew (*neptem*) of Aldegonde, had been committed to the *sanctimoniales* of this convent to be educated.¹³ St. Aldegonde, of whom it is said that she was instructed from

⁶ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, ut supra.

⁷ *Vita Dagoberti III.* *Ibid.*, II, 512.

⁸ Torchet, 13; Montalembert, II, 663 f.

⁹ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., XV, 605 (fol).

¹⁰ Essen, 177, note 5.

¹¹ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., *Rer. Merov.*, II, 457; Mabillon, I, 366, 386; Dupanloup, "Learned Women and Studious Women." *Catholic World*, VI, 29.

¹² Mabillon, *Annales Ordinis S. Benedicti*, I, 456 f.

¹³ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., *Rer. Merov.*, VI, 79.

childhood in sacred learning,¹⁴ admitted also her two nieces, children of her sister, St. Waudru, later foundress and abbess of Mons, for education. She devoted herself assiduously to their training,¹⁵ teaching them the rudiments of knowledge as well as the ways of righteous living, that they might later choose the religious life.¹⁶ An incident pertaining directly to the school, also narrated in the life of the saint, leads to the conclusion that it was attended by a considerable number of children. St. Aldegonde was favored with celestial visions which were, it seems, orderly put to writing by the abbot Subnius of Nivelles. This manuscript, says the biographer, was read in school to the children, the author of the biography himself being evidently among the number. He says: "ex nostra parvitate [i. e., nostra parvarum puellarum (et puerorum) cœtu—Commentary by W. Levison.] puellæ parvulæ coram se legere præcepit, satisque mirati fuimus, quia ante ista tempore ultima simile non audivimus, et ea quæ audivimus veraciter credimus."¹⁷ As an instance furnishing insight into school methods, we must admit it sounds very modern to hear that a little girl read the manuscript to the class in presence of St. Aldegonde; it calls to mind, for example, some pleasant Friday-afternoon exercise.

From these notices and others previously given we might conclude that there is sufficient evidence of the educational activity in institutions of canonesses in Gaul during the Merovingian period. That they are not the only instances that could be mentioned if sources were more abundant, is certain. This seems to be indicated even by the information that we possess, for we find nowhere any indication that it was regarded as a singular practice to receive children for education.

Ireland—The Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Centuries

In reviewing conditions in Ireland during the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries, we would naturally expect to find signs of educational activity in the monasteries of virgins that could bear comparison with that observed in the monasteries of men.

¹⁴ Vita S. Gisleini. *Analecta Boll.*, VI, 261.

¹⁵ "Commendavit ergo eas simul beata mater sorori suae, almae videlicet Aldegundi virgini, obsecrans ut callem rectam eas edoceret, . . . Illa vero libenter ac devote, quae soror exposcebat, pollicetur, se ita esse acturam; quod est postea sincera mente ac prompte implevit." Vita Antiquior S. Vincentii Madelgarii. *Analecta Boll.*, XII, 430.

¹⁶ "Duas autem neptes, filias sororis suae, cum magna diligentia regulariter in monasterio erudiebat, et ut Dominum Christum sibi sponsum eligerent, ab ipsis infantiae rudimentis diligenter edocebat." Vita S. Aldegundis. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXII, 868.

¹⁷ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., VI., Rer. Merov., 80, 88.

We will probably not be wrong in concluding that this actually was the case, especially since in general the education of women was not discouraged in Ireland even before the advent of Christianity. In some instances, as probably at Kildare and other monasteries founded by St. Brigid and St. Ita, intellectual pursuits and school activities might have been even of a high grade of excellence. However, very little evidence has been gathered so far proving definitely the assumption. All sources available permit only occasional glimpses into either the learning of women or their school activities.

That there were nuns and convents in Ireland from the time of St. Patrick, "we know from his 'Confessions,' and from his 'Epistle to Croticus': nevertheless, it may almost be said that St. Brigit of Kildare was the founder of the Irish conventual system."¹⁸ St. Brigid's first foundation, that of Kildare, was renowned as an institution of learning and was probably a double monastery. The fame of the saint obliged her to found not only a monastery for religious of both sexes at Kildare, in order to receive the large numbers of men and women desirous to place themselves under her direction, but obliged her also to found numerous other monasteries for women in various parts of Ireland, all of which she organized under the rule which she had formed.¹⁹ What seems important educationally for the monasteries of St. Brigid, is her own good education. Cogitosus, her biographer, says: "A sua pueritia bonarum litterarum studiis inolevit."²⁰ Her wisdom and knowledge were regarded so highly that the "most eminent persons either visited her or corresponded with her."²¹ That they also sought her instruction, is evidenced in the case of St. Brendan, of whom it is related, that he came to her "to be instructed on a certain religious subject."²² She seems to have been much interested in the good manners of the young. It is related that when on one occasion a youth of her monastery ran in unbecoming haste and manner, she called for him and administered such an effectual yet gentle reproof that he truly amended his conduct and became in later years the saint's consolation.²³ St. Brigid's qualifications and apti-

¹⁸ Joyce, I, 353.

¹⁹ Gougaud, *Les Chrétientés Celtiques*, 93. Paris, 1911; Lanigan, I, 391.

²⁰ Vita Brigidæ, cap. 1, quoted by Lanigan, I, 387, note 30.

²¹ Lanigan, I, 452, note 71.

²² Ut supra.

²³ Ibid., 451.

tudes, augmented by the stimulus of literary enterprises in the convents of monks, would of themselves seem to indicate that the education of girls in the convents, founded by St. Brigid, would be provided for. If, moreover, we consider that girls were even obliged by the Brehon laws²⁴ to be instructed to a certain extent, under the system of fosterage, the education of girls in convents seems still more evident.

What St. Brigid was to the South of Ireland, that St. Ita was to the West. Her nunnery, established in a retired spot called Cluain-Credhuil, was probably the first in that part of Ireland. "We may be allowed to suppose," says Lanigan, "that the want of a similar institution in those western parts was, in the order of Providence, the cause of St. Ita having been directed to settle there. Nunneries and establishments for the education of females had in all appearance, been formed already in her own century, particularly as St. Brigid had been there for some time."²⁵ We are fortunately able to obtain much more definite information on the education of children in the institution of St. Ita. No doubt this is of great importance as an indication that children were also educated in the monasteries of St. Brigid; for we know that St. Ita was a contemporary of St. Brigid and must, therefore, have been acquainted with the organization of the monasteries founded by her. This seems of great importance also for the evidence of schools generally; for whatever conditions are found prevailing in one institution might reasonably be supposed to have existed in another; especially, since in the formative period of monastic life, we could hardly look for a great variety in organization.

Like St. Brigid, St. Ita enjoyed a great reputation for her saintliness and wisdom. Holy Abbots visited her and consulted her. It is related of St. Brendan, that he "did not think it beneath him to consult her on the nature of Christian duties," and that "her answers were full of wisdom and discretion."²⁶ The early education of this saint, under the tutelage of St. Ita, has already been mentioned. St. Cummin, the Tall, also is said to have received his education as a boy in the monastery of St. Ita. Exposed shortly after his birth by his unhappy parents, near the convent of St. Ita, he was found by the holy sis-

²⁴ Cf. Joyce, I, 441.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 84, note 7.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 88.

terhood, who took charge of him and raised him until the age of twelve or fifteen, when he entered the great school of Cork.²⁷ Like St. Brendan and St. Cummian, St. Fachtna "was nurtured under the care of St. Ita, the Brigid of Munster, and received from that wise and gentle virgin those lessons of piety that afterwards produced such abundant fruit."²⁸ Another instance is mentioned in the life of St. Ita; so diligently, it is said there, did she devote herself to the education of young Mochaemoch, the child of her sister, that he merited to become the abbot of many monks.²⁹ These instances seem to verify the statement found in the life of St. Brendan: "Hec . . . uirgo multos sanctorum Hibernie ab infantia nutrit." ³⁰ If boys received their education in the convent of St. Ita, girls evidently could not be excluded. Certain particulars regarding the marriage of the sister of St. Ita,³¹ would seem to indicate that she was at that time under the care of the saint, perhaps in her own monastery.

Certain statements found in the *Acta Sancta Darerca*, may be cited as interesting evidence for the instruction of maidens embracing the religious life.³² Having received the veil of virgins from the hands of St. Patrick, Darerca was committed to a certain priest for instruction under whose tutorship she made rapid progress.³³ We also read in these "Acta" that Darerca founded a religious community, probably the nunnery of Kill-sleve-Cuilin, which is usually attributed to her.³⁴ She was joined by eight maidens and a widow, whose son Luger she also received and educated with so much success that he merited to be raised to the episcopal dignity.³⁵ That the communities of virgins profited also, and probably frequently, by the instructions of religious men seems to follow from the life of St. Abban in which it is said that the virgin Segnith, in her convent of Ceall-Ailbe, educated virgins for God under the direction of the holy father Abban.³⁶

²⁷ Healy, *Ireland's Ancient Schools and Scholars*, 228 f. Dublin, 1890.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 490.

²⁹ Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, II, 121 f. 167. Oxonii, 1910.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 99.

³¹ *Ut supra.*

³² Darerca is sometimes spoken of as a sister of St. Patrick. Irish Annals mention her death for 518. Lanigan, I, 127.

³³ "Cuidam religioso presbitero, prope parentes ejus inhabitanti, curam custodiendi eam psalmosque docendi commisit. Sub hujus magisterio ipsa aliquanto tempore degens ingenii subtilitate tradita facile percipiens, memorie firmitate percepta tenaciter retinens, brevi spatio." De Smedt, *Acta Sanctorum Hiberniae ex Codice Salmanticensi*, 166. Edinburgi et Londoni, 1838.

³⁴ Lanigan, III, 40, note 116.

³⁵ De Smedt, *ut supra.*

³⁶ Plummer, I, 23.

Another instance which shows very clearly that children were educated in the convents of religious women is found in the life of St. Samthanna. Like St. Ita, in the case of St. Cummian, she charged herself with the up-bringing and education of an unfortunate child.³⁷ That the training which the child received was efficient, might be concluded from the statement, that later he acquired great fame as abbot of the monastery of St. Kynnechus. As indications of the education of women in convents, may finally be cited Lanigan's notices on Derlugdacha, who is called a "favorite scholar of St. Brigid," and who "succeeded her in the government of the institution of Kildare,"³⁸ also, a "female pupil" of St. Liadana, mother of St. Kieran, in the convent that St. Kieran had founded for his mother. The latter instance proves that just as there were youths who were educated in the neighboring monastery of monks, over whom St. Kieran presided, so also were there girls who received their education in the convent ruled by his mother Liadana.³⁹ "St. Regnach or Regnacia, sister of the great Finnian of Clonard (Finnian's Life, cap. 21) and abbess of the house called from her name Kill-reg-naighe" numbered among her pupils St. Lasra, who "became distinguished not only for piety, but for knowledge, having been instructed by Finnian."⁴⁰ We will, consequently, not err in concluding that the bright and intelligent minds of the Celtic women of Ireland found opportunities in their convents to acquire an education corresponding to the status of Irish intellectual culture during this period. That the training of boys and girls constituted a considerable part of the occupation of many learned women in these institutions, seems evident from what has been said. Convent schools for girls must have acquired even considerable fame, since they formed an attraction for the women of Anglo-Saxon England to resort to them for their education, as they did to the convent schools of France.⁴¹

England—The Seventh and Eighth Centuries

The early Anglo-Saxon monasteries of England showed from the beginning as much zeal for educational enterprises as those

³⁷ "Sancta uero Samtanna predictum nutriuit infantem, ac deinde literis imbui fecit." *Ibid.*, II, 258.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, I, 460.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 98.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 77.

⁴¹ Cf. Tanner, *Notitia Monastica*, Pref. 11; Denk, 253; Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, bk. III, c. 27.

of Gaul and Ireland. "It is proved by numerous and undoubted witnesses that literary studies were cultivated during the seventh and eighth centuries in the female monasteries with no less care and perseverance than in the communities of men, and even perhaps with more enthusiasm."⁴² Whether this be attributed to the "new spirit which Archbishop Theodore had brought from Greece and Italy," or to the inspiration that had been drawn from monastic Gaul and Ireland, it is a noteworthy fact, that these monasteries became almost from the beginning educational institutions. What has been said of St. Cuthbert's foundation at Carlisle, can very probably be said of most institutions of that period: "Ubi sanctimonialium congregatione stabilita . . . in profectum divinae servitutis scholas instituit."⁴³ Eanswida, daughter of Eadbald, the second Christian king of Kent, made her monastery of Folkestone, which is commonly regarded as the first monastery of Anglo-Saxon England, "after the fashion of all the religious foundations of the time, a great agricultural establishment as well as ascetic sanctuary and a literary school."⁴⁴ St. Mildred, who had received her education at Chelles, became the second abbess of Minster on the island of Thanet. It can hardly be doubted, that she introduced there the arrangement with which she had been acquainted at Chelles, and that the education of the young was provided for, as it was in that institution. When we remember, how anxiously Anglo-Saxon princes sought to obtain from St. Bertile, the learned abbess of Chelles, religious of her community to establish similar institutions in England, it seems evident, that those who had received their training in that, or similar educational institutions, would introduce into the communities which eventually came under their rule, the customs and practices which they so much admired; so that not only at Minster, but in all institutions which thus came under the influence of either the French or Irish schools, the same educational activity might be expected. The efficiency of the educational activity in the monastery of St. Hilda at Whitby has been indicated in the preceding chapter. It appears that St. Hilda "had a large interest in furthering the study of literature, not only in the nunnery founded by her, but in a neighbouring monastery which came largely under

⁴² Montalembert, II, 690.

⁴³ Quoted, *ibid.*, 691, note 114.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 672; Eckenstein, 83.

her influence. In both nunnery and monastery, schools for the children of the district were instituted, which schools were probably the earliest of their class in that portion of Britain."⁴⁵ To St. Hilda, at first abbess at Heruteu (Hartlepool), King Oswy entrusted his daughter Elfreda, then scarcely a year old, to be instructed and educated in the duties of the monastic life. After St. Hilda had founded the monastery of Whitby, Elfreda removed with the abbess thither and was there "first a learner and afterwards a teacher of the monastic life."⁴⁶ The monastery of Ely, founded in 673 by St. Etheldreda, a princess of distinguished piety, daughter of Anna, King of the East Angles and Hereswitha his queen, appears to have been like the other Anglo-Saxon monasteries for women under no particular monastic rule. We are told in general, "That all the members of it had one and the same Rule; Obedience the principal and chief virtue, the love of God's worship, and a strict observance of awful and devout behaviour in the house of God' (Lib. Eliens M. S. lib. I, cap. 15)." This monastery also numbered among its members "persons of the noblest families, and matrons of high rank, that came and put themselves under her direction, being desirous to learn her discipline; or brought their children to be educated and devoted to Religion in her Monastery."⁴⁷ Of Barking, which gained a high reputation as an institution of learning, the Venerable Bede tells us that the religious received for education a boy, "not above three years old, called Esica; who, by reason of his infant age, was bred up among the virgins dedicated to God, and there to pursue his studies."⁴⁸ This fact is important from an educational point of view, as it shows how early the education of children began, and that not only girls but also boys were received for education in Anglo-Saxon monasteries, as they were in Gaul and Ireland. "Wimbourne, which was the great feminine community of Wessex, founded by King Ina, and ruled by his sister Cuthburga," was "the monastery most famed for literary activity. The education of the young novices was the object of the most active and scrupulous care."⁴⁹ Here, as in Anglo-Saxon communities generally, study alternated with the work of the needle.

⁴⁵ Putnam, *Books and their Makers*, 93. New York, 1896.

⁴⁶ Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, Bk. III. c. 24.

⁴⁷ Bentham, 56 f.

⁴⁸ Op. cit., Bk. IV, c. 8.

⁴⁹ Montalembert, II, 694.

"It is apparent," says Montalembert, "that the Anglo-Saxon nuns interpreted the obligation to work which was imposed on them by their rule, to occupy the time which remained after the performance of their liturgical duties, as applying specially to study. They did not neglect the occupations proper to their sex, as is apparent by the example of the priestly vestments embroidered for Cuthbert by the abbess-queen Etheldreda." Yet, by preference, "they left the distaff and the needle, not only to copy manuscripts and ornament them with miniatures, according to the taste of their time, but above all to read and study the holy books, the Fathers of the Church, and even classic authors. All, or almost all, knew Latin. Convent corresponded with convent in that language. Some became acquainted with Greek. Some were enthusiastic for poetry and grammar, and all that was then adorned with the name of science."⁵⁰ Others devoted themselves with special relish to the study of the Scriptures, and all pursued their studies with an enthusiasm which drew upon them the admiration of the scholars of that time.

Germany—From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century

These were the literary and educational traditions which the Anglo-Saxon nuns who became the co-laborers of St. Boniface brought into Germany. To St. Lioba and her companion religious are due the credit of having laid the foundation of the literary culture, which so prominently distinguished German convents from the ninth to the twelfth century. It is to be regretted that so little is known of these sturdy and self-sacrificing religious women. However, from the Passion of St. Boniface,⁵¹ from his letters addressed to several Anglo-Saxon nuns and abbesses,⁵² and especially from the Life of St. Lioba,⁵³ enough may be learned to form an idea of the educational and missionary work with which these fervent religious supported the labors of the great Apostle of the Germans. The statement of the biographer of St. Lioba, "few monasteries of women existed in those districts where Lioba's pupils were not sought as

⁵⁰ Montalembert, II, 690 f.; cf. Aldhelm, *De Laudibus Virginitatis*. *Pat. Lat.*, LXXXIX, 106; Eckenstein, 113; Lingard, 189 f.

⁵¹ Jaffé, *Monumenta Moguntina*, 475. Berolini, 1886.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 31 s.

⁵³ *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XI, 11, 55 ff.

teachers,"⁵⁴ shows very clearly the educational influence exercised particularly through the community of St. Lioba; it also indicates, that religious life spread rapidly among the Germans. That girls were received for merely educational purposes, is evident from a letter of St. Boniface to St. Lioba, while she was abbess of Bischofsheim, in which he "sanctions her taking a girl into the settlement for purposes of instruction."⁵⁵ Apparently, she also had the supervision of other settlements. If we add to this the high esteem in which St. Lioba was held by princes and ecclesiastics, her great influence on education will be evident. " 'Princes loved her,' " her biographer tells us, " 'noblemen received her, and bishops gladly entertained her and conversed with her on the scriptures and on the institutions of religion, for she was familiar with many writings and careful in giving advice.' "⁵⁶ No doubt, similar accounts could be given of the community of Walburga at Heidenheim, of that of Thecla at Kitzingen or Ochsenfurt, and others, had their lives and works been preserved to us. With these traditions as background the flourishing educational status of the institutions of canonesses in Germany will be more comprehensible, especially if we bear in mind, that at some time or other, many of these institutions came under the direct influence of the Benedictine Rule, whose provisions for education admitted a very liberal interpretation.

In Germany, religious institutions for women, "especially those of Herford, Gandersheim, and Quedlinburg, had rapidly developed and exerted a social and intellectual influence such as has rarely fallen to the lot of women's religious settlements in the course of history."⁵⁷ These institutions, among others "gave a domestic and intellectual training which was the best of its kind. Later ages are wont to look upon the standard of education attained at Gandersheim and Quedlinburg as exemplary. The word college (*collegium*), which early writers often apply to these settlements in its modern sense of learning and a teaching body, aptly designates their character. For the religious settlement was an endowed college where girls were received to be trained, and where women who wished to devote themselves to learning and the arts permanently resided."⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Cf. Eckenstein, 136.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 137.

⁵⁶ *Ut supra.*

⁵⁷ Eckenstein, 146.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 149.

The educational activities of these institutions are attested by numerous instances that have been recorded and have come down to us. In the life of Hathumod, the first abbess of Gandersheim, Agius, her brother, tells us, that she received her religious training in the institution of Herford.⁵⁹ Even as a child, says Agius, she was of a serious turn of mind and pursued her studies with untiring zeal, whereas other children had to be compelled by punishment to acquire knowledge.⁶⁰ This zeal for learning Hathumod evinced also as abbess of Gandersheim. Not only did she devote herself most zealously to the study of the Scriptures, but she also encouraged her sisters to do the same; treating with high esteem those who showed ambition and urging the careless, rather by the lessening of her confidence and familiarity towards them than by punishment.⁶¹ Of Queen Mathilde, wife of Henry I, the Fowler (d. 936), the more ancient *vita* says, that she was entrusted to her grandmother, abbess of Herford, "not to be numbered among the sisters, but to be educated in everything useful; in book-knowledge and the practical arts."⁶² That her education was practical and efficient, is apparent from the words of the biographer. "No day," he says, "hardly an hour did she give to idle rest. On feastdays she occupied herself with reading, or listened to what was read by others; on other days she not only gave herself to prayer and the chanting of the psalms, but employed her hands in manual labor."⁶³ So zealous was she for the instruction of others that she never visited the convent of Nordhausen, which she had founded, without repairing to the school to convince herself of the progress each pupil had made.⁶⁴ Her servants and maids she instructed in useful things, especially in the still rare art of reading.⁶⁵

Hathumod, Gerberg and Christine, daughters of Duke Liudolf and Oda, who succeeded each other as abbesses of Gandersheim, "were among the most zealous advocates of culture and civilizing influences in Saxony during the 9th century." They, in particular, laid the foundation of the scholarly traditions which later so eminently distinguished that institution. "After the

⁵⁹ *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XLV, 40.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁶² *Ibid.*, XXXI, 7.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁶⁵ Cf. Giesebrecht, *Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserzeit*, I, 352. Braunschweig, 1855.

death of the abbess Christine the settlement of Gandersheim drifts for a time into the background; Quedlinburg, founded by Heinrich I. at the instigation of his wife Mathilde, takes its place in ducal and royal favour. Scant notices are preserved of the abbesses who ruled during the first half of the 10th century. We hear of the abbess Hrotsuith (d. 927) that she was distinguished like her namesake of later date for literary acquirements, and that she wrote treatises on logic and rhetoric which are lost." The most accomplished and influential abbess of Gandersheim, however, was Gerberg II (959-1001), daughter of Henry, duke of the Bavarians (d. 955), and the teacher of the famous nun Hrotsuit. Under her the institution gained its greatest renown as a literary and educational center.⁶⁶

In the institution of Gandersheim Sophie, daughter of Otto II, received her education. Although she had received a careful training under the abbess Gerberg, she seems not to have reflected much credit on the institution during the earlier years of her religious life. It appears, in fact, that the discipline of the institution had much relaxed during the illness of Gerberg. The biographer of Bernward and Godehard, bishops of Hildesheim, tells us, that the girls who grew up in this training-school of Christ, raised in luxury, no longer knew the extent of the former discipline, and that they later neglected their vows. Sophie, much against the will of Gerberg, spent two years at the royal palace—prior, however, it seems to her taking the veil—in not a very edifying manner. After the death of Gerberg, Sophie became abbess of the institution. Under her tutelage were raised the two daughters of her sister Mathilde and the Palsgrave Ezo, "She raised them," says the same writer, "with motherly affection and had them carefully instructed in knowledge, as far as their age permitted; yet with greater indulgence than their companions, because of their high birth."⁶⁷

Quedlinburg owed much of its fame to its close relations with the royal house of the Ottos. Its foundation was brought about by Mathilde, queen of Henry I, who obtained the removal of the religious from a small establishment, called Wendhausen, to Quedlinburg. Of Wendhausen the biographer of queen Mathilde says, there "tarried the daughters of princes."⁶⁸ That

⁶⁶ Eckenstein, 159 f.

⁶⁷ *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XL, 25, 119, 140 f.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, XXXI, 12.

Wendhausen, one of two small foundations attributed to Gisela, daughter of the heathen Saxon Hessi, was an educational institution at an early date, seems to follow from the *vita* of St. Liutberga, "a Saxon girl of noble parentage who was brought up in one of these little monasteries, but afterwards left it, as she preferred to dwell as a recluse in a neighboring cell."⁶⁹ Of her education her biographer says: "In sacris ergo scripturis incessanter exercebatur, et cottidie meditando quantulumcumque proficiens, quousque ad profunditatem intellectus perveniens, et si imbecillitas sexus non impediret, docibiles existere potuisset."⁷⁰ At Quedlinburg several members of the royal family received their education. Mathilde, daughter of Otto I and Adelheid, was educated in this institution in accordance with the wish of her grandmother, Mathilde.⁷¹ Gifted with qualities of mind and heart which made her eminently fit to rule, she was chosen at the early age of eleven, to assume the government of the institution.⁷² With how much renown Mathilde governed Quedlinburg may be surmised from the trust placed in her by Otto III. Called to the aid of the Holy See by John XV against the aggressions of Crescentius the younger, Otto left the rule of Germany in the hands of the famous abbess. She acquitted herself of this onerous charge with so much prudence, foresight and justice that the world was amazed. Her death (999) was an irreparable loss to Otto III and the Empire.⁷³ Among the girls educated at Quedlinburg under the rule of Mathilde, was Adelheid, daughter of Otto II and Theophanu, the accomplished daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Romanus II. It may be remarked that with Theophanu a hitherto unknown splendor, culture and refinement was introduced into the German court. While Theophanu failed to win wholly the affection of the German people, she was admired for her accomplishments and commended for the manly courage and prudence with which she—acquainted from her earliest years with the art of government—conducted the affairs of the Empire during seven years of the minority of her son, Otto III. It seems very probable, that her influence, educationally, extended to the institutions of Gandersheim and Quedlinburg, where her daughters Sophie, and Adelheid ruled

⁶⁹ Eckenstein, 147.

⁷⁰ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., IV, 159 (fol.).

⁷¹ *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XXXI, 16.

⁷² *Ibid.*, XXXVI, 17 f.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 18 f.; cf. Giesebrecht, I, 694.

as abbesses;⁷⁴ particularly, since "frequent royal visits to Quedlinburg are on record; the court was also entertained at Gandersheim."⁷⁵ Another princess educated at Quedlinburg was Beatrix, daughter of Conrad II and Gisela, noted for her devotion to learning.⁷⁶ Of Beatrix the annalist of Quedlinburg says, that the king and queen sent their only and dearly loved daughter to Adelheid, abbess of Quedlinburg, to be educated. According to the annalist her progress must have been extraordinary.⁷⁷ The Saxon Annalist mentions for the year 1070, a certain recluse Bia, who had received her education in a convent dedicated to the mother of God and located in the western part of the city of Quedlinburg. It seems that she was not a member of that sisterhood at the time of her enclosure.⁷⁸ We also learn that boys were received for education. Of Thietmar of Merseburg it is said, that he received his elementary education in the imperial institution of Quedlinburg from Emnilde, a niece of Queen Mathilde; he apparently continued his studies there until his twelfth year, when he was sent to the monastery of Bergen to complete his education.⁷⁹ As to what constituted the program of teaching, we obtain most direct knowledge from the *Chronicon Goze-cense*.⁸⁰ We read there of Agnes, countess palatine of Weimar: "Et quoniam eadem domina Agnes more antiquorum tam literis quam diversarum artium disciplinis apud Quidelingeburg pulchre fuit instructa."

Similar passages of great educational value may be cited for many institutions of canonesses. Particularly valuable information is obtained from the Chronicle of the convent of Stederburg. This institution of secular canonesses was founded during the reign of Henry II by Friderunde, daughter of Duke Altmann and Hadewig of Olsburg. Friderunde assumed there the habit of the canonesses and transferred all her possessions to the institution. The canonesses probably devoted themselves from the beginning to the education of girls. The chronicler records (1165), that Luder, a citizen of Goslar, brought his daughter Gertrude to the institution—in her worldly dress—to be educated by the canonesses and to be confirmed in good principles; as he feared that

⁷⁴ *Geschichtschreiber*, ut supra; Giesbrecht, 1, 541, 601 f.

⁷⁵ Eckenstein, 153.

⁷⁶ Cf. Wattenbach, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter*, 217. Berlin, 1858.

⁷⁷ *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXVI, 67.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, LIV, 76.

⁷⁹ Wattenbach, 181.

⁸⁰ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, X, 142.

the girl, being deprived of the care of her mother through death, would be led astray by the allurements of worldly pleasures. What appears of particular importance, is not only the fact that the girl was the child of a simple citizen, but that the chronicler approves the good judgment of the man; it proves evidently that it was not an isolated occurrence. Gertrude afterwards became a member of the canonesses much against the will of her father and in spite of the threats of her friends and acquaintances.⁸¹

The canonesses in the convents of Cologne also cherished literary studies. "The abbess of St. Ursula occupied herself, like Hrotsuit of Gandersheim, with the reading of Terence and studied the commentary of Servius on Virgil in order to be able to study the Aeneid thoroughly."⁸² At St. Ursula in Cologne, St. Adelheid, afterwards abbess of Vilich (d. 1015), received her education.⁸³ So greatly was she, as abbess, interested in the progress of the pupils attending the school, that she herself often visited it to examine the little girls in "grammar," and rewarded and encouraged those who gave correct answers.⁸⁴ Among the pupils educated under St. Adelheid's motherly care was Bertha, later St. Adelheid's biographer.⁸⁵ For St. Stephen in Augsburg a significant instance is told in the life of Oudalrich, bishop of Augsburg. There is question of admitting into the convent a certain lady, who, with the consent of her husband, wished to consecrate her life to the service of God in holy religion. But since she was not sufficiently instructed in knowledge, says the biographer, and since she possessed special abilities for household work, the religious wished to make her cellaress; this office however, the aspirant was not inclined to accept.⁸⁶ This instance clearly shows that the members of the institution had to possess a sufficient amount of knowledge to be received, and that, in this case, they evidently made an exception. In the institution of Drübeck, Adelheid, sister of Louis II (1130-1172), count palatine of Thuringia, received her education.⁸⁷

How intensely and extensively studies were pursued at times in the institutions of canonesses, is seen from the life of John,

⁸¹ *Geschichtschreiber*, LXII, 20 f.

⁸² Specht, 337.

⁸³ Schäfer, 21.

⁸⁴ Specht, 263.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 262; Prologus ad Vitam S. Adelheidis (Observationes praeviae). *Analecta Boll.*, II, 211.

⁸⁶ *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXI, 62.

⁸⁷ *Zeitschrift des Vereins für thüringische Geschichte*, I, 341.

Abbot of Gorze. His biographer says, that while he performed his duties of officiating priest at S. Pierre in Metz, he became acquainted with Geisa, one of the pupils, who still quite a girl, was brought up by Fredeburg her aunt, a religious of the institution. So distinguished was this girl from the rest by her manners, conversation and the practices of ascetic living, that filled with remorse at his own sluggishness, as he calls it, he at once began to deliberate "with a fixed mind on a plan for a more perfect life." He began immediately a course of studies with these handmaidens of God, including the Old and New Testament, the computus, the canons, the homilies of the Fathers, and even civil law. Nor did his age deter him from undertaking the study of ecclesiastical music, in which, because of the perseverance of his good desires, he was completely successful. "Thus," says the biographer, "were the leisure intervals of his sacred duties with the aforesaid handmaidens of God employed."⁸⁸ This evidence is interesting not only from the point of view of what constituted the educational program in religious institutions of women during the tenth century, but also for the assurance it gives that a wide acquaintance with knowledge, as we find in the case of Hrotsuit of Gandersheim, was by no means an isolated occurrence. It further shows what favorable conclusions may be drawn for the state of learning in an institution with which some scholarly ecclesiastic stood in close relation.⁸⁹

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the convents in the southwestern part of Germany particularly, included large schools for girls of the nobility. Kloster-Neuburg, for example, had a well attended school. Girls were received there from the age of seven, without contracting any obligation to renounce the world.⁹⁰ Palsgrave Conrad had the canonry of Neuenburg near Heidelberg changed into an institution of canonesses, for the direct purpose of providing educational opportunities for girls of the higher classes. It seems there were ample provisions for the education of boys, since it is said, that he wished that the boys should be instructed and educated in the city, and that there were also other monasteries in which boys of the nobility were taught. Particularly significant is the statement, that "at that time,

⁸⁸ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXVII, 250 ss.; Maitland, *The Dark Ages*, 462 ff. London, 1844; Maitre, *Les Ecoles Episcopales et Monastiques de l'Occident*, 261.

⁸⁹ Cf. Wattenbach, *Geschichtsquellen*, 172.

⁹⁰ Specht, 277.

people were convinced that there was no better school for the education of the young than this kind of monastic institution." This evidently implies that the institutions of canonesses were the generally recognized centers for the education of girls. It was the commonly accepted opinion that there girls were trained in maidenly modesty to become dutiful wives, pious mothers and thus to contribute to the happiness and prosperity of future generations.⁹¹ The convent of St. Erentrudis, or Nonnberg in Salzburg, seems also to have possessed a prosperous school; for Archbishop Conrad confirmed in the twelfth century all donations which this institution had received as requital for the girls they had educated, "quidquid habent vel habiture sunt puellarum educationibus."⁹² Among the girls who received their education at Nonnberg was the scholarly sanctimonialis whose life was written by Gertrude, a religious of the famous institution of Admont.⁹³ This institution, which was organized under the Benedictine rule, came evidently under the direct influence of Salzburg; perhaps even the first religious of Admont came from that institution.⁹⁴ We obtain very instructive information about some phases of its educational activity from the above mentioned vita. Evidently, the religious, whose life is described by Gertrude, embraced the monastic life first at Nonnberg and was later transferred to Admont, where she appears as "magistra," i. e. superioress. According to this vita, the title "magistra" in the sense of teacher could be very properly applied to this anonymous sanctimonialis. Gertrude, who was at least her contemporary if not her pupil,⁹⁵ says: "huc (Admont) transmittabatur in coenobium quarundam noviciarum in commune viventium; quas scholaribus disciplinis instruxit et omnium bonorum augmentis promovit."⁹⁶ Interesting, and full of significance are, no doubt, also the following statements: "Aliquando enim intempesta nocte litteras composuit et scribenti praedixit silentii tamen observantiam retinens nunquam aliqua theutonica verba protulit;" and having observed that she kept strictly the silence prescribed by the rule, even when it was permitted to speak, she adds: "tamen

⁹¹ Lorenz, *Volkserziehung und Volksunterricht im späteren Mittelalter*, 75. Paderborn, 1887.

⁹² *Archiv für österreichische Geschichtsquellen*, LXXI, 9.

⁹³ "... in superiori castro (i. e. Nonnberg, cf. Anal. Boll. XII, 363) eiusdem urbis educata aliquos annos iuventutis suae exegit." *Analecta Boll.* XII, 362.

⁹⁴ *Studien und Mitteilungen aus dem Benedictiner-Orden*, II, 76.

⁹⁵ *Analecta Boll.*, XII, 357, 359.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 363.

cum rogaretur a parvulis ut versus et prosas praediceret illis, sicut erat plena caritate et dilectione, accepit tabulas et scripsit eis reddendos in crastino versus et prosas."⁹⁷ It is evident, that the little children mentioned were pupils who attended the school of the institution. In fact, there were many girls of the noblest families in the twelfth century who received their education at Admont.⁹⁸

What renders Admont of particular importance educationally, is the influence it exercised through several of its nuns, who became abbesses in other convents of nuns and canonesses. Admont was very famous in the twelfth century, both for its excellent, regular observance and the scholarly accomplishment of its nuns.⁹⁹ Its religious were sought to introduce regular discipline into convents requiring reform. Reglindis, one of the most scholarly women of her time, was thus called from the cloister of Admont in 1156, to reform the convent of Berg. So excellently did she fulfill her mission that within a few years she was summoned by Emperor Frederic I to restore, in like manner, the regular observance at Hohenburg. There, the learned abbess instructed the girls brought to the convent in all the seven liberal arts, and so great became the renown of the institution that it was the admiration of the neighboring districts. How thorough and extensive the knowledge acquired by her pupils was, can easily be estimated from the literary achievements of Herrad of Landsberg, her most distinguished pupil.

Many other indications of the existence of schools and the education of children in institutions of canonesses may be adduced to show how extensively canonesses occupied themselves with the education of girls and even of boys. To Doxan, an institution of Premonstratensian canonesses in Bohemia, Duke Wladizlaus confided his daughter Agnes, after the death of Gertrude, his wife (1151), "to be instructed in religion and to be trained to a pious life."¹⁰⁰ Documentary evidence testifies to the "scolares puelle" in Vreden for 1222, and a scholastica, or canoness entrusted with the special management of the school is mentioned in numerous documents and statutes for St. Cæcilia of Cologne; she is mentioned also for Neuenheerse in 1205. For

⁹⁷ Ibid., 363 f.

⁹⁸ Specht, 277.

⁹⁹ *Studien und Mitteilungen aus dem Benedictiner Orden*, II, 79, 288.

¹⁰⁰ "Vincenz von Prag." *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XVII, 20.

Essen documents testify to the "scolarum magistra" or "scholastica" since the eleventh century. We find in Essen, as in Gandersheim and Quedlinburg, abbesses distinguished for culture and learning during the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, to whom daughters of kings even were confided for their education. Fraumünster at Zürich was still in the thirteenth century under abbess Elizabeth the center of culture and learning.¹⁰¹

France—From the Eighth to the Twelfth Century

Although we do not find in France women so scholarly as St. Caesaria of Arles, St. Radegund at Poitiers during the sixth century, or St. Bertile of Chelles and St. Anstrude of Laon during the seventh, whose literary attainments furnish an index of the educational achievement in convents of nuns and canonesses during those centuries, we know that the practice of educating girls, even of those not intended for the life in the cloister, continued uninterruptedly from the eighth to the twelfth century. It is true, that the dark ages of wars and invasions, during the ninth and tenth centuries proved most destructive to religious institutions in France as in the British Isles. Some of them were deserted, others, laid waste, disappeared during the Danish invasions. It was a time of wholesale destruction of monastic institutions, wherever the barbarian invaders of the North set their eye for plunder. Yet, when times once more grew tranquil, and the Dane set down to peaceful pursuits in the plains of northern France, England or Ireland, the educational work was resumed, with more or less zeal, in institutions which were either refounded, or whose circumstances had sufficiently improved to permit such enterprises. At any rate, the education demanded for the fulfillment of the duties of the religious life, were never wholly neglected, not even during the dark days of impending destruction. That the study of letters retained its fascination for the feminine sex, and was indulged in when opportunities offered themselves, is abundantly testified by the many women who showed a taste and appreciation for literary studies, who elicited the admiration and commendation of some of the greatest scholars of that time and who did not hesitate to venture, at times, their skill in literary compositions.

We find these literary women in the world as well as in the

¹⁰¹ Schäfer, 173 ff.

cloister, to the training of which many, no doubt, owed their fame as scholars.¹⁰² In some instances we obtain direct knowledge of the education of girls in monastic and canonical institutions. Hildebrand, for example, tells us that young girls were sent to Ronceray at Angers for the sake of a more solid instruction.¹⁰³ From Abelard we learn that Heloise, abbess of the Paraclete, had received her early training in the convent of Argenteuil.¹⁰⁴ The names of abbesses distinguished for literary tastes, such as Caecilia, daughter of William the Conqueror and abbess of Caen; Emma, abbess of St. Amand at Rouen, to whom Baudri the poet and abbot of Bourgueil addressed some poetry in reply to that which he had received from her; Marsilie, who succeeded Emma as abbess of St. Amand at Rouen; Mathilde of Anjou, second abbess of Fontevraud who corresponded with scholars and engaged Peter of Chelles to write treatises for her instruction; her sister Angelucie whom the historian of her life regards as the flower of Fontevraud, and many others, clearly indicate that their appreciation of a literary education benefited those who came under their direction.¹⁰⁵ Thus Heloise, of whom Abelard says, that she had received a very efficient training in the convent of Argenteuil, and whose learning had further increased under the instruction of Abelard, devoted herself, as abbess, zealously to the instruction of her sisters. "She taught Greek and Hebrew to her sisters," says Maître, "and revealed to them the sublime beauties of the Scriptures."¹⁰⁶

England—From the Ninth to the Twelfth Century

To comprehend the extent of the destruction of religious institutions in England, during the Danish invasions, "one must read the address which Wulfstan, archbishop of York (1002-1023), wrote to rouse the English to consciousness of the indignities to which their religion was exposed. (Wulfstan, edit. Napier, Arthur, Berlin 1883, p. 156.) But the collapse was only temporary; bishoprics and abbacies stood firm enough to command the attention of the invader, and as the heathenism of the

¹⁰² Cf. Jourdain, M. Chas., *Mémoire sur l' Education des Femmes au Moyen Age*, in *Mémoires de l' Institute Nationale de France*, XXVIII, 89 ff.; Rousselot, *Histoire de l' Education des femmes en France*, I, 20 ff.; Maître, 258 ff.

¹⁰³ *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, IX, 128.

¹⁰⁴ ". . . Quae (abbatia) Argenteolum vocatur, ubi ipsa (Heloissa) olim puellula educata fuerat atque erudita." Jourdain, *Mémoire*, 95.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 90 f.

¹⁰⁶ *Opus cit.*, 262.

Dane yielded without a blow to the teaching of Christ, the settlements that were in the hands of abbot and monk rose anew."¹⁰⁷ It was, however, only after the establishment of the Norman rule (1066) that monastic institutions began to flourish; that is those of men but not those of women. "During the reign of William many Benedictine houses for monks were founded or restored, but we do not hear of one for nuns."¹⁰⁸ The Cistercians, who first came to England in 1128, established only settlements of monks; nunneries of the order were founded at a comparatively later date and always remained poor and unimportant.¹⁰⁹ A notable advance in the conditions of monastic orders of women in England was made only by the orders of combined canons and canonesses of the Order of St. Augustine and that of St. Gilbert of Sempringham. Various reasons have been given for this comparatively low ebb of religious life among women in England. The insecurity of warfare and the lawlessness of the time furnish, no doubt, the most obvious reasons for the phenomenon.¹¹⁰

"The monasteries ruled by women, which survived the political changes due to the Danish invasion and the Norman Conquest, had been in connection with women of the house of Cerdic; with hardly an exception they were situated in the province of Wessex within the comparatively small area of Dorset, Wilts, and Hampshire. Chief among them were Shaftsbury, Amesbury, Wilton (or Elladune), Romsey, and St. Mary Winchester (or Nunnaminster). With these must be classed Barking in Essex, one of the oldest settlements in the land, which had been deserted at one time but was refounded by King Edgar, and which together with the Wessex nunneries, carried on a line of uninterrupted traditions from the 9th century to the time of the dissolution."¹¹¹

Of these institutions, all of which observed the Benedictine rules, Amesbury, one of the oldest and wealthiest abbeys of the land was dissolved in the twelfth century and reorganized as a priory under the abbess of Fontevraud. "This connection with France, at a time when familiarity with French formed part of a polite education, caused Amesbury to become the chosen re-

¹⁰⁷ Eckenstein, 188.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 189.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 191 f.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 202.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 202 f.

treat of royal princesses.”¹¹² In how great esteem these institutions were still held is clearly seen in the instance of Queen Margaret of Scotland and her family. Not only did the queen desire to become a nun, but “her mother and her sister Christina both took the veil, and her daughters, the princesses Matilda and Mary, lived at Romsey for some years with their aunt Christina.” Matilda and Mary were evidently there to attend the school. From the narrative of the restoration of the abbey of St. Martin at Tornat, by Hermanus, abbot of this monastery, we obtain definite evidence, not only of Matilda’s education, but of the girls’ school at Romsey. The question which brings forth the evidence is the legality of Matilda’s proposed marriage with Henry I. It is alleged that Matilda had received the veil only as a protection against dishonor and that she had not assumed with it the obligations of the religious life. Being called before the ecclesiastical tribunal, presided over by St. Anselm, by whom the case was to be decided, the abbess gives the following testimony: “Revera rex David pater ejus (evidently Malcolm, since Matilda was the daughter of St. Margaret and Malcolm, king of Scotland.) mihi eam commendavit, ut non sanctimonialis fieret, sed ut solummodo in ecclesia nostra propter cautelam cum caeteris puellis nostris coetaneis suis nutriretur, et litteris erudiretur.”¹¹³ The letters of Matilda, as queen of Henry I, to St. Anselm, and her charitable deeds, “throw light on the Latinity of the Romsey pupil and the tastes she had imbibed there . . . All her life she retained a taste for scholarly pursuits, and patronized scholars and men of letters.

. . . The queen both read and admired Anselm’s writings, and compares his style to that of Cicero, Quintilian, Jerome, Gregory and others (3. 119) with whom her reading at Romsey may have made her acquainted.”¹¹⁴ We hear of another girl, named Eva, who was brought up in one of these Wessex convents in the early part of the twelfth century; but she left it and went to Anjou where she led an edifying life as a recluse.¹¹⁵

The community of nuns of the Order of Knights Hospitallers, at Buckland also was one of those houses where “all the education of the age was encouraged, and where both religion and

¹¹² Ibid., 205.

¹¹³ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CLXXX, 52.

¹¹⁴ Eckenstein, 209 f.; Ep. 119. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CLIX, 156.

¹¹⁵ Eckenstein, 211.

education yielded to the full their refined and refining influences. It was, doubtless, also a noted seminary for the daughters of the great neighboring families. . . . Reading, writing, some knowledge of Arithmetic, the art of embroidery, music and French, 'after the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,' were the recognized course of study, while the preparation of perfumes, balsams, simples, and confectionery was among the more ordinary departments of the education afforded; and we should wrong alike the teachers and the taught if we regarded the result as unfavorable."¹¹⁶

The Gilbertines appear to have taken much less interest in the education of children not destined for the order, than the Benedictines. The rule ordained that the canons should not teach any other boys except novices in their houses, "because the work might interfere with their care of the nuns."¹¹⁷ It is probable, however, that they taught boys in houses which consisted of canons only, or, perhaps, in schools outside the monastery. There is mention made of a master of schools at Malton for 1245, which seems to confirm that opinion. As an evidence of the education of girls in the Gilbertine establishments, may very probably be regarded the prohibition issued by Honorius III in 1223. It was directed to the master and chapter of the order, and enjoined not to admit "any young girl or woman, who did not intend to become a nun, to be nurtured or taught in the convents of their order."¹¹⁸ It seems, besides, very improbable that St. Gilbert meant to exclude rigorously every form of educational activity from the duty of either the canons or canonesses. Certainly, he was not indifferent to the need of education for the children of the district, for he applied himself diligently to instruct the boys and girls of Sempringham and the neighborhood; and he not only taught them "the rudiments of learning, but also morals and monastic discipline."¹¹⁹

There was apparently ample provision made for the education of the canons and canonesses themselves. It has already been shown that a certain amount of knowledge was required of the novices before they were admitted to profession, that is as regular members of the order. Besides this elementary train-

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 196 f.

¹¹⁷ Graham, 131.

¹¹⁸ Ut supra.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 5.

ing, the canons and canonesses were required, it seems, to devote a considerable time to reading and studying. The provisions of the rules are very minute in ordering the manner of conduct to be observed in the reading room, and the care and distribution of books. In reading they are to sit with "the face of one to the back of the other, each with his own book." Those who were studying the parts of the office and the chant were not to annoy each other with useless questions, only "when they know not how to point their chants, how to say the words in the reading, where to begin at table, at collation, and at vigils" might they seek the help of a companion. If anyone needed a book that another brother was using, he offered him another instead; if the latter refused to let him have it, he suffered it in patience, but made accusation against him in the chapter.¹²⁰ Writing, however, was not encouraged. Those who wrote in secret, against the regulations, were to be punished severely; only those who were authorized to write were permitted to do so; and as they wrote, it seems, "without ceasing" "some mercy of sleep" was to be granted to them. The precentor provided the parchment and ink for writing and took care of the books which the canons used for services. Books, like all valuables, were, according to the express direction of the rules, in charge of the canonesses.¹²¹

The canonesses observed the same regulations in regard to reading. There was to be no quarreling over books; each was to be satisfied with the book she received and was not to appropriate that of another. The precentrix, who was strictly speaking the director of the choir, was also the librarian of the house; "she wrote out the table of services with the names of those who were to take part in them for the week, and chose out the book for collation. She kept the key of the cupboard containing the service-books and the library of the house, and, with the consent of the nuns passed through the window to the canons such books as they required. In accordance with the Benedictine custom, she divided the books after chapter on the first Sunday in Lent. The nuns who had not properly read the books given to them in the last year asked for pardon. The prioress chose a prayer for use through Lent, and appointed the

¹²⁰ Cf. Graham, 60.

¹²¹ Ibid., 60 f.

Scrutatrices of the cloister to watch over reading and work."¹²² That the learning of, at least, some of the canonesses was considerable, appears to follow from an injunction of the rule, which forbids them to use the Latin language in conversation.¹²³

The lay-sisters also received a certain amount of instruction. "They attended the nuns' church for the services when they could spare time from their labour; like the lay-brothers they said the Pater Noster and versicles which they had been taught at the other Hours. On feast days, when the sisters did not labour, the Prioress chose out a learned nun to go with a book and speak to them 'for the good of their souls and concerning the rigour of the Order.' The Rule was read to them two or three times in the year."¹²⁴

2. *The Schools for Externs*

From these indications of educational activity in institutions of canonesses, it has been seen that in them were trained not only girls, purposing to embrace the canonical life, but also girls destined for the life of courts and of the world. Canonesses followed in this, as in many other ways, the earliest traditions of monastic life. Attention has already been called to the fact, that in the Eastern Church—to the inspiration of which Western monasticism owed its origin—the education of children was considered an important duty of the religious life. Two authentic documents, the Rule of St. Basil,¹²⁵ and the treatise of St. John Chrysostom, written in defense of the monastic life,¹²⁶ amply testify, that in the fourth century monasteries in the East received children, to train them either for the monastic life, or a Christian life in the world. Questions twenty-five, thirty-eight, and fifty-three, of the rule, have reference to children. In the reply to the fifteenth question, St. Basil prescribes the rules to be observed for their admission, and we see there, that he makes a clear distinction between the two classes of children that were brought to the monasteries, viz. orphans, including children abandoned by their parents, and those who were presented by the parents themselves, the "oblats." None were to

¹²² Ibid., 68; Eckenstein, 216 f.

¹²³ "Omnia prohibemus Latinam linguam inter omnes (moniales) nisi conveniens occasio compellat." Quoted by Graham, 5, note 18.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 69.

¹²⁵ Holstenius, I, 65-108.

¹²⁶ Migne, *Pat. Gr.*, XLVII, 351 ss.

be denied admission, even when presented at the most tender age, according to the express desire of our Lord: "Let the little children come unto me." Article thirty-eight formulates regulations serving as a basis of discipline for their education. At the end of this article, it is definitely stated that these children should be granted full liberty, when they arrived at a mature age, usually sixteen or seventeen, to choose for themselves either the monastic or secular state of life. The existence, therefore, of a class of children and adolescents admitted into the convents and educated according to the rule, without any obligations to assume the duties of the monastic life, is a fact confirmed by the institute of St. Basil. From the high esteem, in which the rule of St. Basil was held in the East, the educational import of these regulations can clearly be seen.¹²⁷

These regulations of St. Basil remained the custom in the Eastern Church. That they were also observed, during the earlier centuries in the Western Church, follows from several indications in the letters of St. Jerome and the ruling of St. Augustine; the latter wishes that children should be allowed to choose the secular, clerical or monastic life.¹²⁸ We remember the advice of St. Jerome to Laeta on the education of her little daughter Paula, when in her distress she applied to the saint for direction: "Let us put her in the cloister,"¹²⁹ was his reply; "a most important statement for the history of pedagogy," remarks Ernesti, "for it gives testimony: a) that monasteries and in particular those of women had made education their duty; b) that this kind of institution existed long before the end of the fourth century; for they are pointed out, not at all, as something new, and Paula had already a long experience; c) that they were used extensively."¹³⁰ Parents were encouraged to send their children for ten years and more to a monastery for the sake of a Christian education. This view is expressed in a letter of Cyril of Alexandria to the Libyan bishops,¹³¹ and the aforementioned treatise of St. John Chrysostom, *Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae*.¹³² The latter in particular urges parents to avail themselves of this help in the

¹²⁷ Lalanne, *Influence des Pères de l'Eglise sur l'Education Publique*, 172 ff. Paris, 1850.

¹²⁸ Cf. Thomassin, *Disciplin de l'Eglise*, P. II, 141.

¹²⁹ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 877.

¹³⁰ *Sammlung der bedeutendsten pädagogischen Schriften aus alter und neuer Zeit*, 3. Bd., 27. Paderborn, 1889.

¹³¹ Ernesti, ut supra.

¹³² Migne, *Pat. Gr.*, XLVII, 319 ss.

arduous task of educating their children; he even makes it their duty, telling them they are guilty before God if they neglect to do so; instead of attempting to interfere and prevent the work of religious in the education of youth, they ought to aid them to secure that blessing by joint effort.¹³³ With such teaching and the rapid increase of monasteries the admission of externs was a natural consequence. How closely monastic education came thus within reach of all classes of people, may be surmised from the fact, that St. Basil found himself obliged to forbid the establishment of more than one monastic community in the individual villages.¹³⁴ That among these communities were probably a considerable number of communities of early canonesses, similarly occupied with the education of children, seems evident from several indications derived from the writings of St. Basil; they have been pointed out in the introductory chapter in speaking of the origin of canonesses.

From these observations it follows that there was an entire harmony in the attitude of the early Church, in general, on the question of educating children in the cloister; it has also been observed that there was no distinction made between admitting boys and girls for educational purposes. At times it is even definitely stated, as for instance by St. Chrysostom,¹³⁵ that the pedagogical principles applied to both sexes. In view of such and similar evidence, special scholars of patristic pedagogy assert that "the three kinds of pupils¹³⁶ were of usual occurrence in the East, and formed the types for the schools of the Middle Ages,—*scholae internae*, *scholae claustrales* and *scholae externae*."¹³⁷

The same arrangement appears to have existed in the early monasteries of the Western Church. "The outer and inner departments of the monastery came, to be recognized at an early period in the history of monasticism in Gaul. There was no legislation, it is true, in regard to the separation of the classes of students, but the prohibition of St. Caesarius shows that both classes of children presented themselves for instruction, and they

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 351 ss.; cf. Lalanne, 175.

¹³⁴ Weiss, "Die Erziehungslehre der drei Kappadozier," in *Strassburger Theologische Studien*, V. Band, 3. u. 4. Heft, 122. Freiburg, 1903.

¹³⁵ Cf. Ernesti, *Aus Seminar und Schule*, Gesammelte Schriften über Erziehung und Unterricht, 106. Paderborn, 1907.

¹³⁶ I. e. according to Weiss, page 119, "interns," including children offered for the religious life, those received for education, who also lived in the monastery, and "externs," who frequented the school only, living outside the monastery.

¹³⁷ Weiss, 122.

were practically designated. He had allowed the nuns to accept the *'oblati,'* those who were offered as future subjects of the monastery, and prohibited the reception of those whose purpose there was merely educational. The fact that his successor Aurelian was obliged to settle the age for the reception of children, making it ten years instead of six or seven, incidentally attests the eagerness of parents to place their offspring with the religious, some even desiring to do so with their infants."¹³⁸

It is important, to note here the attitude of the Church towards the institution of the *oblatus*. Under the earlier provisions children might, after their training in a monastery, return to the world, if they chose to do so. This was ordained by the Rule of St. Basil and was the practice in the Eastern Church. The same discipline was observed originally in the West; "if a parent offered a child before he was capable of giving his own consent, the act was of no force, unless the child confirmed it voluntarily, when he came to the age of discretion—which the second Council of Toledo reckons to be about the age of eighteen."¹³⁹ But even from the time of Leo the Great, we observe that the dispositions in the Western Church were assuming a more rigorous aspect on this point of discipline.¹⁴⁰ Already the fourth council of Toledo (633) declared, that the monastic profession was as irrevocable as that of Christianity embraced in baptism, whether it had been entered upon by one's own choice or the parental will. Similar rulings are found in canon nineteen of the fifth council of Orleans and the twelfth canon of the first council of Mâcon. These disciplinary enactments, sanctioned and confirmed repeatedly by Papal decrees, remained in force until the end of the twelfth century. It was only Celestine II who, towards the close of the twelfth century, issued a contrary decree, which annulled all professions of minors, and those which had not been made by free choice.¹⁴¹ In England, however, a milder discipline seems to have been in force, probably because of the influence of Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, who must have been inclined to moderate occidental rigor with the indulgence of the Eastern Church.

Monastic rules were naturally in accord with these regulations.

¹³⁸ McCormick, 16.

¹³⁹ Bingham, II, 280.

¹⁴⁰ Thomassin, P. II, 141.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 139 ff.

The Benedictine gives details of the ceremonies to be observed on the occasion of dedicating a child to the service of God (can. 59), symbolical of the irrevocable act of immolation; and it enjoins strictly on parents the duty never to tempt or solicit the return of their children to the world. That of St. Isidore says: "Quicumque a parentibus propriis in Monasterio fuerit delegatus, noverit se sibi perpetuo permansurum. Nam Anna Samuel puerum natum et ablactatum, Deo pietate qua noverat obtulit: quique in ministerio templi, quo a matre fuerat functus permansit, et ubi constitutus est, deservivit."¹⁴² Others contained similar regulations. Parents in particular are to refrain from conferring property on these children, and thus to a certain extent oblige them to perseverance.¹⁴³ In the institutions of the canonical type, however, an irrevocable donation of the oblati did not exist, since one of the essential features of the order was the liberty allowed to the members to return to the world if they chose to do so.¹⁴⁴

It seems evident from the customs that prevailed in the Eastern monasteries, and obviously also, at first, in those of the West, that there was no distinction made between the education given to the oblati and those who would probably return to the world, or even those who frequented the monastery only for instruction. This arrangement was in many instances of advantage to the monasteries themselves in fostering vocations; for children, who were admitted merely for education, chose, no doubt, in many instances of their own accord the monastic life, in virtue of their training. Frequently, parents who did not wish to impose a vocation on their children, by offering them as oblati to the monasteries, but who, nevertheless, desired that they might choose it voluntarily, confided them, for that reason, to religious institutions for education. A notable instance of that kind is recorded for Maubeuge, where St. Aldegonde received and educated the children of her sister, St. Waudru, for the special purpose that they might choose Christ as their spouse.¹⁴⁵ This pious wish of their mother and aunt they afterwards fulfilled most creditably.

The distinction between pupils termed "interns" and "externs," probably mentioned first by St. Caesarius, was made very likely

¹⁴² Holstenius, 1, 189.

¹⁴³ Thomassin, 140.

¹⁴⁴ Schäfer, 215 ff.

¹⁴⁵ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXII, 868.

in Western countries, with more or less precision throughout the greater part of the period antedating definite legislation for the school of externs; the opportuneness of their education in the monastery being determined either by the various monastic legislators—and it must be remembered that, practically, there were as many as there were monastic foundations,—or, probably, more frequently, their education in the monastery was sanctioned by monastic authority by way of tolerance or undertaken even from the evident desire to secure the education of the young as a duty. It is true, that certain monastic legislators, notably St. Caesarius and St. Donatus, ruled very definitely that no children were to be received for merely educational purposes,¹⁴⁶ but we also know and have seen that they were received freely in the Benedictine and Columban monasteries; nor were they excluded from institutions of the canonical type.

Although there is no definite proof that the educational legislation of Charlemagne affected positively the education of girls in monasteries, it seems hardly possible that the effect would not have been felt, very extensively also in the monastic institutions of women. There are indeed two canons of the capitulary issued from Salzburg (803–804), which prohibit the education of externs, boys and girls, in the monasteries of women, but it is believed that they were little observed. The canons read as follows:

“Quicumque filiam suam aut neptem vel parentem Deo omnipotenti offerre voluerit, licentiam habeat; sin autem, domui infantes suos nutriat et non aliam infra monasteria mittere nutriendi gratia presumat, nisi quæ in ipso loco firmiter in Dei servitio perseverare voluerit, vel secundum instituta sanctorum patrum seu canonicam auctoritatem.”

“Omnino prohibemus, ut nullus masculum filium aut nepotem vel parentem suum in monasterio puellarum aut nutriendum commendare præsumat, nec quisquam illum suscipere audeat.”¹⁴⁷

The monks, it is true, are only mentioned in the capitularies of the monarch, but the grave motives which urged him to interest himself in their literary education existed as well for the com-

¹⁴⁶ “Et si fieri, potest, aut difficile, aut nulla unquam in Monasterio infantula parvula, nisi ab annis sex aut septem, quæ jam et literas discere, et obedientiæ possit obtemperare, suscipiatur. Nobilium filiae sive ignobilium, ad nutriendum aut docendum, penitus non accipiantur.” Regula S. Caesarii ad Virgines. Holstenius, *Codex reg.* I, 356.
¹⁴⁷ “Nulla cujuslibet filiam in Baptismo neque divitis neque pauperis præsumat excipere. Neque ad enutriendum ad docendum nobilium vel pauperum filiae recipiantur, nisi quæ in Monasterio sub habitu religionis sicut et reliquæ perseverent.” Regula S. Donati Vesont., *Ibid.*, 388.

¹⁴⁷ *Mon. Germ. Hist., Leges, I, Capitularia, 119; Specht, 282.*

munities of women. Besides, his decree of 789, on behalf of the education of children of servile or free rank, could hardly have been without effect on the education of children in institutions of nuns and canonesses. This view seems to be supported by the legislation of Charlemagne, which insists on the religious instruction of women—as will be noted in the next few pages—and a certain gloss of the Carolingian period, which, in giving the definition of “deaconess,” explains the purpose of her consecration, “ut instruat omnes christianas feminas fide et lege Dei, sicut erant in vetere lege.”¹⁴⁸ As in the institutions of canonesses only the abbess was called “diaconissa,”¹⁴⁹ this statement is evidently significant as an index of the nature of the educational work of canonesses.

It is well known that the educational reform contemplated by Charlemagne, and supported by Louis during the first few years of his reign, was temporarily brought to a close by the decisions of the council of Aachen in 816 or 817, which, for the sake of stricter discipline in monasteries, prohibited the education of externs.¹⁵⁰ However within a few years the bishops, assembled in the imperial diets at Attigny in 822, and at Worms in 829, by the provisions which they made for the schools of externs, partially retracted these decisions, in view of the evil consequences for culture and learning, as well as public education in general. In consequence we record from this time “the formal establishment of the schools for externs at the episcopal sees and the larger monasteries.”¹⁵¹ There seems little reason to doubt that the school for externs was provided for also in the larger convents of nuns and canonesses—if at all the legislation prohibiting the education of externs had affected them.

Evidence for the schools of externs in convents of women, is seen by Specht in the legislation which provides that girls admitted for education should wear their secular dress in the convent. The statute is as follows: “Statuimus etiam ut in ipso clauastro nulla femina domicella vel vidua residere permittatur in habitu saeculari; admittentes, ut famule domus et virgines, que manualia opera vel Psalterium discunt, vestibus Laicalibus licite uti possunt.”¹⁵² This evidence for the school of externs, at the end

¹⁴⁸ Quoted by Schäfer, 51.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 60.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. McCormick, 43 f.; Specht, 34.

¹⁵¹ McCormick, 45; Specht, 35, 37.

¹⁵² Op cit., 278; *Monumenta Boica*, III, 359 (1764).

of the thirteenth century (1296), can be cited also for earlier dates. We learn, for example from the life of St. Wulfilda that Wulftrude, who was espoused to King Edgar in 961, and who received her education in the convent of Wilton (Elladune), wore her secular dress (*habitu saeculari*).¹⁵³ The same was evidently true of Matilde, queen of Henry I of England, who was raised in the convent of Romsey with her sister Mary. As we have seen the abbess of that convent testified in Matilda's case, that she had given her the veil only on a particular occasion for the sake of protection.¹⁵⁴ For an institution of canonesses in particular, the same fact is evidenced in the *Chronicle of Stederburg* for the year 1165. We read there that Gertrude Luder, mentioned before as a pupil of this institution, was entrusted by her father to the canonesses for her education, "in her secular dress."¹⁵⁵ Particular importance arises from the fact that in each instance it is obviously meant to be emphasized. For France the existence of the school for externs in the twelfth century is at least proved for Argenteuil and Ronceray at Angers.¹⁵⁶

Particularly valuable evidence for the education of externs in convents of nuns and canonesses is a number of records which mention the education of boys in these convents. Several instances have already been pointed out in the preceding pages for Ireland and England. Speaking of the custom in general, Specht says: "Not rarely did one or the other of the learned nuns undertake gladly the task to teach a tender offspring of her relationship—who was to become an ecclesiastic—playfully the elements, that he might enter the cathedral or convent school well prepared. Convents of women took thus, in a certain sense, the place of preparatory institutions for the public schools of the clergy."¹⁵⁷ A capitulary issued by Charlemagne at Salzburg in 803, on various points of discipline, forbids this practice,¹⁵⁸ but it seems to have been little observed. Paschasius Radbertus, abbot of Corbie (844–851), received his early education at the institution of Our Lady in Soissons; Archbishop Maurice of Rouen was maintained, and probably also educated, as a poor boy in the

¹⁵³ *Analecta Boll.*, XXXII, 17.

¹⁵⁴ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CLXXX, 52.

¹⁵⁵ *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, LXII, 20.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, IX, 128; Rousselot, I, 22.

¹⁵⁷ *Op cit.*, 282.

¹⁵⁸ "Omnino prohibemus, ut nullus masculinum filium aut nepotem vel parentem suum in monasterio puellarum aut nutriendum commendare praesumat, nec quisquam illum suscipere audeat." *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Leg. I, Capitularia.

convent of canonesses at Troyes; Dietrich, abbot of St. Hubert, in the Ardennes mountains (1055–1087), was instructed in the elements and the Psalter by his sister, a canoness of Maubeuge. If to these instances, and others that have been cited, we add the strange fact that the Pole Sbignew, already quite a youth, was sent by his stepmother, the duchess Judith, to a convent in Saxony to be instructed in the elements of knowledge, it will be obvious how widely the custom was in use.¹⁵⁹

Outside of the prohibition to receive externs for education, found in the Rule of St. Cæsarius and others based on it, and the legislation of Charlemagne, promulgated by his capitulary from Salzburg (803–804), we find no ruling from civil or ecclesiastical sources, during the succeeding centuries, which prohibit directly the admission of girls for education, until the decree issued by Honorius III in 1223, which forbade the Gilbertines to receive girls for education only.¹⁶⁰ A similar prohibition was finally given to the Premonstratensian canonesses by a special statute of their rules, which reads as follows: "In domibus Sororum nostrarum, nulla secularis persona, ut ibidem vel demoretur, vel nutriatur, quocumque modo admittatur, et amissa, si monita recedere noluerit expellatur, et recipientes graviter puniantur."¹⁶¹

3. *Legislation Affecting Convent Schools and the Education of Women in General*

Of particular importance also, from the viewpoint of educational evidence, are the decrees of councils and synods, the encyclicals and capitularies of ecclesiastical and civil rulers, which prescribe or regulate educational activity. They are indeed numerous for the period in question, and in many instances of great educational significance.¹⁶² Nevertheless, in regard to feminine education, very few records of legislation can be found that would stimulate an optimistic view on the education of women. Legislation, however, as previously indicated, is no certain guide in estimating either the extent or character of educational work carried on in an institution, state or country. Very frequently the very silence on educational matters implies that there was no need for legislative interference, that educational activity was

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Specht, 282 f.; Cramer, *Geschichte der Erziehung und des Unterrichtes in den Niederlanden*, 135. Stralsund, 1843.

¹⁶⁰ *Regesta Honorii III*, II, 122. Romae, 1895.

¹⁶¹ Holstenius, *Cod. reg.*, V, 275.

¹⁶² Cf. McCormick, *op. cit.*, chap. II, III, IV.

carried on in a satisfactory manner, and that there were no abuses which required correction. But when legislation, as for instance the capitularies of Charlemagne, issued in 802, enjoined on priests the duty to teach their parishioners the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, we have reason to conclude that this duty of priests was being neglected and that the legislation merely tended to enforce an obligation generally recognized. The very silence, therefore, of legislative action on the question of feminine education indicates a rather favorable status of education in convents of women. There are, besides, many other reasons for believing that such was actually the case. The fact alone, that women in general showed a greater appreciation for learning than men, excepting the clergy and religious, is convincing proof that educational work was held in high esteem in convents of nuns and canonesses.

In offering this explanation to a fact which in many ways seems inexplicable, it is of special importance to recall also the attitude of the Church towards feminine education. It is true that in some directions she "built high the barrier about woman," in others however, "she left her a freedom unknown to the ancients and opened to her a career of extraordinary utility."¹⁶³ The latter was evidently the case when there was question of woman's education. The interest of the Church centered in the religious instruction of women, for she has always upheld the principle that without religion no true education is possible—that religion, in fact, must form the basis of a sound education.

Her attitude in this respect is shown very clearly in the writings of the Fathers. It is indeed remarkable how persistently they exhorted women, to whom they addressed so many of their letters, to make religious knowledge their own. The attitude of the Fathers towards the education of women was maintained throughout many centuries. Whether we examine the treatises of St. Caesarius and St. Aldhelm, or the letters of St. Boniface and Alcuin, or the various rules for religious women, the same spirit is found to prevail. It is true, that didactic literature is generally addressed to women in the cloister; but it must be remembered that they were the seats of the culture and learning of the age, and that whatever benefited the inmates of the cloister was sure to be of advantage to those who came to them for the sake of instruction.

¹⁶³ Cf. Shahan, *The Middle Ages*, 173 f. New York, 1904.

Legislative evidence, besides, evinces in a number of instances, at least indirectly, that the education of women formed the concern also of ecclesiastical legislation. Mention may be made, for example, of canon ninety-seven of the so-called Fourth Synod of Carthage, held in 398. It provides that an ecclesiastical superior for religious women must be examined by the bishop;¹⁶⁴ an evidence, no doubt, that the proper qualifications were required of those charged with the spiritual direction, if not instruction, of women in the cloister. The regulations of the second synod of Orleans (549), which provided a novitiate of three years for institutions of canonesses,¹⁶⁵ also admits of an interpretation favoring education; for it was during this time that the candidates, who presented themselves for admission, received their literary training.¹⁶⁶ In the seventh century, canon eleven of the synod of Seville (619) provided that the convents of women, founded in the province, should be under the administration and protection of monks, and that the "spiritual fathers" should take care of the instruction of the nuns. By this arrangement the nuns were to be relieved from the distracting cares of temporal affairs. In return for these services they were to provide the clothing for the whole establishment. The monk who was placed in charge of the affairs in the communities of nuns had to receive the confirmation of the bishop.¹⁶⁷

Of ecclesiastical legislation, concerned directly with the educational activities in convents of women, must be mentioned in the first place the council of Cloveshove, "convened in 747 for the correction of abuses and the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline." Several enactments of this council are also "of singular importance in the history of English schools." "The comprehensive nature of the educational uplift intended by the Fathers can be seen from the text of the canon. All schools are included—those for boys and those for girls, although it is quite clear that the chief concern of the bishops is for those schools where young men were prepared to discharge the office of clerics and priests in the service of the Church."¹⁶⁸ Abbesses, as well as bishops and abbots, were admonished by this council to culti-

¹⁶⁴ Hefele, II, 76.

¹⁶⁵ Schäfer, 42.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 173 ff.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Gams, *Kirchengeschichte von Spanien*, II, Zweiter Theil, 88. Regensburg, 1874.

¹⁶⁸ McCormick, 26 f.

vate a love for reading in their respective communities.¹⁶⁹ Above all, the council of Aachen in 817 emphasized the education of candidates admitted into the institutions of canonesses. The rule for canonesses approved by this council urges the importance of a thorough training for girls from childhood, lays great stress on the proper qualifications of those entrusted with the education of these girls, and outlines the method and content of education according to the teaching of the Fathers and particularly the educational theories of St. Jerome.¹⁷⁰ The special importance of these regulations evidently arises from the fact that they formed the basis of all educational activity in the institutions of canonesses during the succeeding centuries.

It seems also of importance to call attention to the significance of legislative enactments which we meet repeatedly and which enjoin the instruction of the faithful by parish priests. As canonesses were directly connected with parish churches,¹⁷¹ and as it appears that the instruction of women formed part of their duties,¹⁷² special educational significance is derived from this kind of legislation. It is also important to note that although these decrees are concerned simply with the teaching of the very elements of religion, they imply in reality a much more extended course of instruction. The knowledge of the Our Father and Credo, with which most of them are chiefly concerned, formed only the groundwork of medieval catechetical instruction; on it was based the whole matter of Christian doctrine, "totius religionis studium et christianitatis cultum," as Charlemagne's capitulary of 802 says.¹⁷³ Charlemagne, in fact, addressed two capitularies in that year to parish priests, urging them to impart this kind of instruction to all their parishioners. The one referred to reads: *Ut unusquisquam sacerdos orationem dominicam et symbolum populo sibi commissio curiose insinuet ac totius religionis studium et christianitatis cultum eorum mentibus ostendat.*" Bishop Garibald of Liège enjoined the same duty on the priests of his diocese, in his letter of 804, and specified clearly that it was to be taught to all, adults as well as children.¹⁷⁴ Finally,

¹⁶⁹ "Septimo decreverunt conducto, ut episcopi, abbates, atque abbatissae . . . studeant, et diligenti cura provideant, ut per familias suas lectionis studium indesinenter in plurimorum pectoribus versetur." Mansi, *Coll. Conc.*, XII, 397; quoted by McCormick, 27 f.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 969 f.

¹⁷¹ Schäfer, 76 ff.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 53.

¹⁷³ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Leg. I, Capitularia, 106.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Norrenberg, *Frauen-Arbeit und Arbeiterinnen-Erziehung in deutscher Vorzeit*, 59. Köln, 1880.

the famous decree of Theodulf, bishop of Orleans, could hardly be said to have excluded the education of girls, even if they are not directly mentioned. The very nature of the decree seems to admit this interpretation.¹⁷⁵ What renders this decree particularly significant is, that it is not only remarkable "for its beautiful expression in behalf of free and elementary education for the poor," but particularly for its recurrence "in church councils throughout the Middle Ages."¹⁷⁶

These measures on part of the bishops show that they cooperated with Charlemagne to carry out his plans of educational reform. How earnestly Charlemagne desired that his orders should be carried into effect is evidenced by his capitulary of 804, in which he decreed that those who failed to comply with his orders should be flogged and subjected to a fast, on water, until they learned the Our Father and Credo.¹⁷⁷ This regulation did not exempt women; in fact, their instruction, in particular, is emphasized in a capitulary of 809.¹⁷⁸ The provisions for popular instruction continued in force after the Carolingian period. Of legislation, however, there is hardly a trace beyond what was already decreed concerning the education of the clergy and the religious instruction of the people. The schools of canonics and monasteries, left to their own resources, developed their educational facilities according as circumstances happened to favor such development.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. McCormick, *History of Education*, 96. Washington, 1915.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

¹⁷⁷ Norrenberg, loc. cit.

¹⁷⁸ *Capitularia*, op. cit., 233.

CHAPTER IV

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

1. Administration

It can hardly be doubted that the arrangement and organization found in the schools attached to the monasteries of monks and canons furnished the models for the schools organized in the convents of nuns and canonesses. In what pertains especially to methods and curriculum, even discipline in general, institutions of women must naturally have been guided by what they observed was the procedure in the monasteries of men. There is nothing on record to prove that in either phase of educational work there was any innovation introduced by women. It may indeed be taken for granted, that in their details of application, there was as much diversity in schoolwork as in the schools of monks and canons, for each institution naturally took advantage of its opportunities. What seems to lend particular emphasis to this assumption is the conspicuous zeal for letters and religious knowledge on part of superiors or influential persons that guided the destinies of these institutions—instances of which one meets repeatedly in a study of monastic education in the Middle Ages. Furthermore, the very absence of set standards, generally recognized, which would systematize educational work, evidently tended to produce such conditions. Yet, with every opportunity for self-exertion and individuality in scholastic as in other affairs, general features in educational activity are everywhere distinctly evident; they were the natural consequence of the medieval conception of life and its ideals. There was unity in thought and principles which specified the educational aim, the destiny of man and the means to be employed to reach that destiny. These were the unifying elements which determined the general character of medieval education. Our knowledge, therefore, even of only a few educational institutions, shows the general character of all school activity, and it is from

this point of view that the following notices on schoolwork have been compiled.

The organization of the schools of canonesses no doubt resembled very closely that provided in the schools of canons. It has been shown already that most institutions of canonesses belonged to the double monastic system, under which a community of canons administered to the spiritual needs of the canonesses. Several features, too, have been pointed out which tended to influence educational practices in the schools of canonesses. There remain, however, others, due to the general administration of the institution, which perhaps still more effectually determined the details of the educational work in institutions of canonesses.

All important affairs in institutions of canonesses came, since an early date, under the jurisdiction of a general chapter, also called *congregatio* and *collegium*—*congregatio* mainly from the ninth to the twelfth century—under the presidency of the abbess, who represented the chief governing power. To this chapter belonged all fully qualified canonesses and canons of the institution. None of the canonesses still attending the school had a voice in the chapter, nor any of the canons who had not finished their studies and received the subdiaconate or other of the higher orders. The sessions of the general chapter ordinarily took place once a month in the chapter-hall of the canonesses, and were presided over by the abbess or, in her absence, the provostess or the *decana*. All important affairs of the institution were deliberated on in this chapter, and the final decisions, recorded in writing, were stamped with the great seal of the particular church (*sigillum maius ecclesiæ N. N.*) and acquired thus legal significance.¹

Besides the general chapter, there were provisions made for special chapters or congregations in the community of canonesses as in that of the canons. For special reasons, also, these chapters might convene for a common session. Ordinarily those of the canons met in the sacristy of the church under the presidency of the *decanus*, the provost, or the oldest canon in rank; in some institutions the abbess had the right to convene also these chapters of the canons and to preside at their meetings. In the special chapters or congregations of the canonesses the abbess presided regularly, but could be replaced by the provostess in case of necessity. In the sessions of the special chapters of the canon-

¹ Schäfer, 154 ff.

esses, measures were taken on matters pertaining particularly to the canonesses, such as the admission of young candidates into the institution and the disposition and management of the special income of the canonesses. The sessions of the special chapters were more frequent and took place also at regular intervals. In Neuss, for example, the canonesses met, since a very early date, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday; in Bedbur they met every fourteen days; in St. Mary of the Capitol at Cologne the chapter of discipline was called every three months, while the general chapter was held once every month; there were, besides, frequent extraordinary sessions called by the abbess. The special chapters of canonesses were held in the chapter-hall of the institution.²

In institutions where the number of canonesses exceeded that of the canons, or where their descent from prominent ancestral houses gave them special influence, and where the management of special endowments was reserved to them, precedence was claimed by the college of canonesses; but where the settlement of canonesses happened to be made at an old collegiate church of canons, or where the chapter of canons was especially numerous, the canons played an important rôle in the general management of the institution.³

Besides the various chapters which aided the abbess in the fulfillment of her duties, she was assisted by five chief dignitaries; the *præposita* and *decana* principally, but also the *thesauraria* or *custodia*, the *scholastica* and probably the *celleraria*. Both the *præposita*, or provostess, and the *decana* might, as has been pointed out, fulfill the duties of the abbess in case of her absence or disqualification.⁴

The *scholastica* and probably also the *decana* were directly connected with the educational work of the institution. The office of *decana* existed long before the eighth century in institutions of English sanctimoniales. It is proved for the institution of Gerresheim before 874; for Essen in the eleventh century; for Neuenheerse in 1123; for Altenmünster in Mainz in 1191; for Gernrode in 1205; for Quedlinburg in 1200; for Vreden in 1218; for St. Maria of the Capitol in 1223; as well as for Geseke and St. Waudru among others. The principal duty of the *decana*

² *Ibid.*, 163 f.

³ *Ibid.*, 165.

⁴ *Ut supra.*

was the supervision and direction of the choir-service;⁵ it probably corresponded to that of the precentrix in the Gilbertine houses, and that of the primiceria, an office already instituted by St. Cæsarius at Arles.⁶ It seems also very probable that, as the primiceria in the monastery at Arles, she was charged similarly with the direction of the school of chant, especially since the chanting of the Divine Office constituted such a prominent part in the canonical life. The scholastica, as assistant to the abbess and special directress of the school, is mentioned frequently in the documents of individual institutions. However, our information concerning her is limited almost exclusively to a mere indication of the office, leaving much room for conjecture as to the details of her duties; evidently, they corresponded in general to those of the scholasticus, who had the same charge in the community of the canons. She is mentioned, for instance, in several documents and the statutes of the institution of St. Cæcilia in Cologne; the existence of the office is proved for Neuenheerse in a document of 1205; for Nivelles in 1073; and she is mentioned also for Geringswalde in Saxony. In St. Waudru four senior canonesses were in charge of the young candidates attending the school, while in Neuss the abbess had to appoint a mistress for the young canonesses.⁷

In accordance with the *Regula Sanctimonialium* of 816, the abbess at first belonged to the teachers of the candidates aspiring to membership in the institution, as well as the young canonesses. Her duties in this regard are specified in canons nine and fourteen of the regula. She is to exercise above all great vigilance and prudence in the admission of young girls into the institution: "cavendum abbatissis est, ne incaute et indiscrete eas in congregatione admittant, ne forte earum admissio aliquod in posterum generet scandalum."⁸ It is the duty of the abbesses to watch over and provide for the bodily comfort of the pupils, and the canonesses must be zealous in training them in the practice of virtue, setting in all things the good example, "ne per earum exempla perversitatum in lapsum occurrant vorraginum."⁹ They must also insist on the formation of good habits: "Provideant etiam ut otio vacare non possint, sed potius aut orationi,

⁵ *Ibid.*, 167 f.

⁶ Cf. Graham, 68; Malnory, 268.

⁷ Schäfer, 173 f.

⁸ *Regula Sanctimonialium* ab Amalario Collecta. Migne. *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 962.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 965.

aut lectioni, aut manuum operationi insistant, aut certe divinis lectionibus aurem accommodent."¹⁰

A number of well-known instances may be mentioned which show with how much zeal abbesses applied themselves to the formation and training of the nuns or canonesses under their charge; in many instances they undertook also their literary instruction. Attention has already been called to the noble example of St. Radegund. This pious queen never failed to teach first by example what she wished her sisters to practice, and took great care to have them well instructed. She saw to it, for instance, that the sisters understood what they read. Baudonivia, her biographer, says: "Cum lectio legebatur, illa sollicitudine pia animarum nostrarum curam gerens, dicebat: 'Si non intellegitis quod legitur, quid est, quod non sollicite requiritis speculum animarum vestrarum?' Quod etsi minus pro reverentia interrogare præsumberetur, illa pia sollicitudine maternoque affectu, quod lectio continebat, ad animæ salutem prædicare non cessabat."¹¹ Of St. Gertrude of Nivelles it is said that she made use of her extensive knowledge of the Scriptures to explain them to others;¹² of St. Anstrude, abbess of St. John at Laon, that she continued to perfect her literary knowledge throughout her whole life, and that she excelled as a teacher;¹³ the fame of St. Bertile of Chelles as a teacher extended, as has been seen, beyond the boundaries of France into England;¹⁴ Tetta, abbess of Wimborne, is known to us as teacher chiefly through her famous pupil, St. Lioba;¹⁵ of Hathumod, the first abbess of Gandersheim, Agius tells us that she was a skillful teacher. So clearly did she summarize everything she taught, even in questioning her pupils, that the question itself resembled rather an instruction than a test.¹⁶ Among the abbesses famous for their learning and zeal as teachers in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries must be mentioned Gerberg of Gandersheim, the teacher of Hrotsuit;¹⁷ Reglindis of Hohenburg, of whom it is said: "in pauculorum annorum spatio triginta tres velata virgines congregans,¹⁸ ita in litteris Latinis ac pietate Christiana eas instituit,

¹⁰ Ut supra.

¹¹ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., Rer. Merov., II, 383 s.

¹² Mabillon, I, 386.

¹³ *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, III, 445.

¹⁴ Torchet, I, 48.

¹⁵ *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XIII, 60.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, XLV, 45.

¹⁷ Schurzfleischii Praefatio ad Opera Hrotsuithae. Migne. *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXVII, 944.

¹⁸ I. e. canonesses reformed under the rule of St. Augustine.

ut omni viciniae admiratione essent";¹⁹ Herrad, the famous pupil and successor of Reglindis at Hohenburg, who compiled for the use of her sisters the *Hortus Deliciarum*, or "Garden of Delights"—a compendium of the knowledge of her age—which she provided with German glosses to be serviceable to those also who had not yet mastered the Latin language,²⁰ and Heloise, the learned abbess of the Paraclete, who, under the direction of Abelard, taught to her sisters the languages and vast knowledge which she possessed.²¹ Numerous other instances may be cited, but those mentioned suffice to indicate that abbesses at all times, who possessed knowledge and an appreciation for learning, invariably interested themselves in the instruction of their sisters. That they did not neglect the formation of their subjects in the practice of virtue and their training of character may likewise be shown from most of the above cited treatises.

Besides the abbess, the scholastica, and perhaps the decana or the cantrix,²² who were the regular teachers in institutions of canonesses, as well as individual canonesses shared in the work of educating the younger girls.²³ Only such of the canonesses were, however, to be entrusted with this charge whose character and conduct justified their selection for this responsible duty.²⁴ Instruction by individual sanctimoniales followed very naturally from the provisions found in the statutes of many institutions by which the canonesses were permitted to keep in their private residences the daughters of their relatives.²⁵ Those girls received into the institution who had no relative among the canonesses lived in the house of the abbess; this appears to have been the rule in some institutions, as long as the girls were obliged to attend the school;²⁶ and it may be observed that all girls received as prospective members were obliged to attend the school of the institution until they had acquired the necessary knowledge for the fulfillment of the duties of the canonical life.²⁷ As to girls received merely for education, private instruc-

¹⁹ *Rilindis et Herradis, Hohenburgensis Abbatissae—Notitia et Fragmenta*, Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXCIV, 1537 s.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 1539 ss.; Eckenstein, 238 ff.; Specht, 271 f.

²¹ *Hist. Litt. de la France*, IX, 128.

²² Cf. Schäfer, 182; Specht, 184.

²³ Schäfer, *ut supra*.

²⁴ "Praeferantur eis ex sanctimonialibus tales magistrae quae utique et probabiles sint vitae." *Reg. Sanctimonialium*, c. XXII. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 969.

²⁵ Cf. Ducas, 19; Schäfer, 199 f.

²⁶ Schäfer, *loc. cit.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 183.

tion was probably the custom in addition to their frequenting the regular school of the institution.

The ruling, that governed the admission of girls, and the length of time during which aspirants to the canonical life were required to frequent the school, varied in individual institutions. St. Caesarius indeed forbade the admission of children under six or seven years of age;²⁸ and St. Aurelius enjoined that they should not be received before the age of ten or twelve;²⁹; but these regulations were necessarily only of local significance and could not be regarded as the rule even in the early monasteries. It is on the contrary testified in numerous instances, and sanctioned by the Rule of St. Benedict, that children were received and raised in monasteries from their earliest infancy. St. Odilia, for instance, was sent as a child of one year to the canonical institution of Baume les Dames to be raised and educated in that convent.³⁰ The earliest age at which children were admitted was probably determined in the individual institutions; in institutions of canonesses, it appears to have been, in general, the seventh year. An ordinance of the bishop of Münster to the abbess of Borghorst says, "precipimus puellas non recipi nisi aseptem annis et supra . . ."³¹ In Wetter also children were received at the age of seven.³²

The length of the school-period varied greatly in different institutions and at different epochs. At St. Ursula in Cologne the young girls attended the school from the age of seven till they were fourteen or fifteen years old. If after these seven or eight years they had learned all that pertained to the choir-service, they had to wait still two years more before they were admitted as fully qualified members into the institution. In Bedbur the first investiture might take place at the age of twelve; after that, one and one-half years had to elapse before they could be admitted into the chapter. In Essen the minimum length of the school-period was two years and six weeks, even for grown and educated girls. In Herdecke girls attended the school at least three years, in the later Middle Ages, before they were received as members. No girls could be received before the age

²⁸ *Regula ad Virgines*. Holstenius, *Cod. reg.*, I, 356.

²⁹ *Regula ad Monachos*, *ibid.*, 150.

³⁰ *Vita S. Odiliae*. *Mon. Germ. Hist., Scr.*, Rer. Merov., VI, 26, 39; Schäfer, 172.

³¹ Quoted by Schäfer, 174, note 8.

³² *Ut supra*; cf. Weinhold, *Die deutschen Frauen in dem Mittelalter*, 89. Wien, 1851; Jacobius, *Die Erziehung des Edelfräuleins im alten Frankreich nach Dichtungen des XII., XIII. und XIV. Jahrhunderts*. 55 f. Halle, 1908.

of fifteen in Herdecke, and not before they were fourteen in Neuss and Elten.³³ The school-period for girls admitted for education only, evidently varied according to circumstances; although it must be admitted that also in their case general customs determined to a great extent the age at which education began and the length of time devoted to it.

2. *Studies*

Our interest in the educational activity of the institutions of canonesses naturally centers in the program of studies. At first sight it would seem desirable to make, in the treatment of this subject, a distinction between the educational program followed in the education of girls not destined for the religious life, and that followed in the training of the future religious. On close examination, however, this distinction seems not fully warranted, first, because of the want of sufficient evidence to establish that distinction; and second, because we are not even fully certain, in most instances, that there actually existed a separation between externs and interns. Besides, we know that women in the world, highborn and even those of the lower classes, fulfilled certain religious duties, mainly that of reciting the Psalter, as nuns and canonesses did, and therefore required the same or at least a similar training. Girls brought to convents for education received instruction and training in household arts, such as spinning, weaving, sewing and embroidery, but this training was also given to girls whose future life would be spent in the convent. It seems, therefore, that there existed very little difference in the educational program followed in the training of both classes of girls, at least in regard to their elementary studies and the preparation for the duties of domestic life. Evidently, the candidates and canonesses themselves profited in the first place by the educational provisions in individual institutions. Therefore, their instruction and training furnishes the type to be studied. Incidentally it may be valuable to note certain features that determined the kind of training demanded for women in the world, by existing social conditions; these will be pointed out in the course of the treatment, since they undoubtedly influenced convent education in general and that given in institutions of canonesses in particular.

³³ Schäfer, 139, 179.

The curriculum of studies in the schools of individual institutions varied naturally under particular circumstances. Probably, in many convents it did not extend beyond the knowledge demanded for the proper fulfillment of the duties of the religious life, and embraced only the elements of education: reading, writing, the chant and simple arithmetic. In many instances, however, there is conclusive evidence that the educational program was astonishingly complete and advanced.³⁴ The best index of what constituted the educational curriculum in its most advanced form and under most favorable circumstances, in institutions of canonesses, for example, is evidenced very conclusively by the high degree of learning attained by Hrotsuit of Gandersheim, in the tenth, and Herrad of Hohenburg, in the twelfth century. It is true, that these, and others that might be cited, are but individual instances of pupils whose ambition, probably as much as the instruction which they received, was instrumental in acquiring such a scholarly education; but it must always be remembered that the same opportunities were open to all associated with them.

From the study of the educational achievement of individual pupils, in addition to the direct information available, we obtain a sufficiently complete knowledge of what constituted the program of studies in individual institutions, at various periods and in various countries. We obtain thus types of institutions, which, although they probably present the best achievement of the age and country, may still be considered indicative of the degree of literary culture obtainable in many other institutions, less known indeed, but perhaps not less famous in their flourishing periods.

Study, in general, seems to have formed a most agreeable pastime for religious women at every period. Manual labor, such as the cultivation of the soil, enjoined by the Benedictine Rule, or the pastoral duties of canons, which duties absorbed a great part of the day of monks and canons, was limited in their case to the ministration of the immediate wants of the community, particularly the manufacture of clothing. Religious women were therefore exhorted repeatedly to occupy themselves during their leisure hours with reading, study or the writing of poetry, to avoid the temptations fostered by idleness. The ex-

³⁴ Cf. Jourdain, 95.

hortation of St. Jerome to Demetrias,³⁵ and his instruction on the education of a girl addressed to Laeta,³⁶ give especially enlightening information on the studies of women.³⁷

Latin

The study of Latin evidently formed the most important part of the curriculum of studies. When mention is made of reading as an elementary study, it must be remembered that it was Latin and not the vernacular; for reading in the vernacular was the exception and not the general practice. Latin was the language of the Church. The Divine Office which formed such an important part of the devotional practices in the religious life, was participated in, as has been shown, very extensively also by the laity. The desire for a knowledge of the Scriptures, which induced Paula and Eustochium to study Greek and Hebrew, to be able to read them in the original, was the great incentive to learn at least the Latin, when the Vulgate had been brought into existence through the untiring zeal of St. Jerome—under the stimulus furnished by Paula and Eustochium. Reading, enjoined so generally by the rules of religious founders, implied the reading of the writings of the Fathers as well as the Scriptures. Religious, therefore, read extensively in Latin, even from the viewpoint only of religious instruction.

We have seen what reading St. Jerome considered suitable for women. Later evidence shows even a more comprehensive program, especially when profane writers were admitted into the curriculum of studies. What writers were read in the sixth century by the religious in the convent of Poitiers, for example, we learn from the poet Fortunatus, who tells us that St. Radegund read the writings of St. Gregory Nazianzus, of St. Basil, St. Athanasius, St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, Sedulius and Orosius.³⁸ St. Aldhelm recommends to the virgins of Barking the special study of the works of Cassian on the religious life, and the *Moralities* of Gregory the Great, a commentary on the Book of Job.³⁹ To her thorough knowledge of the Scriptures St. Lioba, in the eighth century, added the study of the writings of the

³⁵ Ep. 130. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 1119.

³⁶ Ep. 107. *Ibid.*, 867.

³⁷ Cf. Specht, 259; Weinhold, 115; Jourdain, 95 f.

³⁸ Cf. Jourdain, 84; *Hist. Litt.*, III, 347; Denk, 263 f.

³⁹ Eckenstein, 114. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, LXXXIX, 112 s.

Fathers, the canonical decrees and laws of the Church.⁴⁰ The traditions of Wimborne St. Lioba and the other pious Anglo-Saxon nuns introduced into Germany when they were called upon to share the missionary labors of St. Boniface.

For the liberal allowance made in regard to reading in canonical institutions during the tenth century the comprehensive knowledge, even of profane authors, evinced by Hrotsuit of Gandersheim is especially significant. A study of her writings shows acquaintance with Virgil, Lucan, Horace, Ovid, Terence, and perhaps, Plautus; of the Christian writers she evidently had read Prudentius, Sedulius, Fortunatus, Marcellinus Capella, and Boethius.⁴¹ Barack, a critical editor of the works of Hrotsuit believes that Hrotsuit even read Greek authors.⁴² In the same century the canonesses of St. Peter of Metz followed a course of reading conducted by John, Abbot of Gorze, which embraced the Old and New Testament, canon law, civil law, the homilies of the Fathers, besides various commentaries on the Epistles and Gospels.⁴³ That profane as well as sacred writers were read in the English convent schools seems sufficiently evident from the education Queen Matilda, wife of Henry I, had received at Romsey; her letters to St. Anselm show acquaintance with the writings of Cicero, Quintilian and Fabius, besides those of St. Jerome, St. Augustine and Gregory the Great.⁴⁴ Herrad of Hohenburg, in her eagerness for knowledge, had read all spiritual and profane books contained in the library of her convent; the writings of the Fathers and many other ecclesiastical writers, as Isidore of Seville, Bede and Gregory the Great. She was even fully acquainted with the writings of her contemporaries, especially Honorius of Autun, St. Anselm, Peter Lombard, Ivo of Chartres and Rupert of Deutz. The extensive knowledge which she had thus accumulated from her reading, Herrad made accessible to the canonesses of her community at Hohenburg by compiling for them the *Hortus Deliciarum*.⁴⁵ Heloise, possessed besides a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, a knowledge of

⁴⁰ *Geschichtschreiber*, XIII, 66.

⁴¹ Cf. *Die Werke der Hrotsuitha*, ed. K. A. Barack, Vorrede, X f. Nürnberg, 1858. Eckenstein, 162.

⁴² *Ut supra*, LIV.

⁴³ *Vita Joannis Abbatis Gorziensis, Auctore Joanne Abbate S. Arnulfi*. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXVII, 251 s.; Maitland, 456; Maître, 261.

⁴⁴ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CLIX, 156; cf. Eckenstein, 210.

⁴⁵ Cf. Specht, 271; Jourdain, 97.

the writings of the Fathers, especially of St. Jerome and St. Augustine.⁴⁶

How thoroughly, at times, religious were conversant with the Latin language is especially evidenced by their writings, many of which have been preserved. Their correspondence, for instance, with St. Boniface, St. Anselm, Hildebert of Tours, St. Bernard and Peter of Chelles, among others, brings to light many interesting features of the scholarly attainments of individual nuns and canonesses, besides their proficiency in Latin. The lives of saints written by some religious of the early canonical institutions are likewise undeniable evidence of the command of the Latin language attained at times in convents of women. Some of them, as for instance that of St. Radegund by Baudonivia, are ranked among the masterpieces of the period in which they were written. The remains of poetry which have come down to us, not considering those masterpieces produced by Hrotsuit, are another proof that nuns and canonesses possessed sufficient knowledge of Latin to handle it even with a certain amount of skill. Latin, besides, must have frequently formed the language of daily intercourse; for we find that in the twelfth century St. Gilbert prohibited the colloquial use of Latin to the moniales.⁴⁷

Greek

That the study of Greek formed a part of the curriculum of studies under specially favorable circumstances seems probable, though it can be definitely proved only in very few instances. We may for example be justified in believing that the study of Greek was not excluded from the Irish convents of moniales; for it is well known that Irish monks excelled in that language. Nisard, a student of the poetry of Fortunatus and of that of St. Radegund thinks that the list of Greek Fathers which Radegund studied suggests her knowledge of Greek.⁴⁸ Even if this supposition cannot be endorsed, notice must be taken of the significant fact that the knowledge of Greek was not rare, at that period, in southern Gaul; for when St. Caesarius became bishop of Arles he decreed that the antiphones should be sung, partly in Latin, partly in Greek, by the laity, to prevent their gossiping

⁴⁶ Jourdain, loc. cit.; *Hist. Litt.*, IX, 128.

⁴⁷ Graham, 5; Eckenstein, 216.

⁴⁸ Cf. Eckenstein, 60.

in church.⁴⁹ Greek was probably studied in some of the institutions renowned for learning, in Gaul during the seventh century. "St. Gertrude in Dagobert's reign, knew all the Scriptures by heart, and translated them into Greek. She sent over the sea for Irish masters to teach music, poetry and Greek to the cloistered virgins of Nivelles."⁵⁰ Besides some indication of the study of Greek in Gandersheim, already mentioned, the best known instance is that of Heloise. From her early childhood Heloise was a boarding-pupil in the convent of Argenteuil, where she learned not only the Latin language but also Greek and Hebrew.⁵¹ Later as abbess of the Paraclete she taught these languages in the school of her convent. It is believed that a Greek Mass in honor of the Holy Ghost, still sung in the fifteenth century, was composed by that famous scholar.⁵²

Grammar

Grammar was usually studied together with reading. Bertha, the biographer of St. Adelheid of Vilich, tells us that St. Adelheid frequently visited the school of her convent and examined the girls in grammar, showing special affection towards those who answered her questions correctly.⁵³ Queen Matilda, wife of Henry I of Germany, showed a similar interest in the school of her foundation at Nordhausen.⁵⁴ "In Anglo-Saxon convents girls were instructed in grammar, versification and in all the other liberal arts."⁵⁵ Certainly the proficiency in Latin attained by a considerable number of women in the world and cloister could hardly have been attained without a rather thorough course in grammar. The faulty Latin, of the otherwise very scholarly writings of St. Hildegard, was due to her want of the knowledge of grammar. In many instances, probably, the use of Latin as the colloquial language, constituted the only means of

⁴⁹ Cf. Denk, 230; Cramer, 54.

⁵⁰ Dupanloup, *Studios Women*, 11; transl. by P. M. Phillimore, Boston, 1869.

⁵¹ *Hist. Litt.*, XII, 630.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 642.

⁵³ "Moveret de arte grammatica questiunculas, si qua forte suae quaestione congruenti responso obviavit, mox illam materne deosculando aliqua mercede donavit, et spe sui profectus perfusa est spirituali leticia." Vita Adelheidis, Abbatisa Vilicensis, Auct. Bertha. *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Ser. XV, P. II, 760 (fol.).

⁵⁴ "Nam ex quo primum monasterium construxit, hanc consuetudinem semper habuit, ut ipsa scholam intraret, et singularum studia intente perosceret; quia sibi fuerat hoc munus gratissimum, videre vel audire cujusque hominis profectum." *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Ser., IV, 299 (fol.); *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXI, 23, note 3.

⁵⁵ Specht, 265.

learning Latin forms; but in many other instances it is evident also that regular grammar-courses were given.⁵⁶

Scripture-Study

Language studies formed the necessary preparation for the study of the Scriptures, the chief study of the medieval curriculum. Ability to interpret Holy Writ in its threefold meaning, the historical, moral and mystic, constituted the highest of all literary training. The learning of the Psalter preceded in many instances the regular courses of instruction given in the convent schools. From her tender years, says St. Jerome, let the tongue of little Paula be trained in the sweet melodies of the Psalms.⁵⁷ How important this injunction was considered many centuries later is evidenced by the *Regula Sanctimonialium*, in which it is literally repeated.⁵⁸ That this advice of St. Jerome to Laeta was carried out in practice is proven by historic facts. We hear, for instance, that St. Rusticula as a young child in the nunnery of Arles learned with marvelous facility the Psalter by heart, which the religious taught to her.⁵⁹ The Psalter was generally committed to memory. This was the practice already in the community of St. Paula at Bethlehem, where the sisters had to know the Psalms by heart and to learn daily some part of the Scriptures.⁶⁰ Instruction in reading began with the reading of the Psalter; while, therefore, children learned to read they obtained at the same time a more thorough knowledge of the Psalter.

The study of Holy Writ derived its importance, in the medieval curriculum of studies, from the religious ideals which penetrated deeply medieval life and thought. Religion occupied "the central place in the soul-life of the Middle Ages," and determined "the spirit and tendency of medieval education. Studies, science, knowledge, intellectual development, are not valued for their own sake, but as a means for attaining Christian perfection."⁶¹ Education, therefore, to be effectual must aid the individual to promote his sanctification by helping him to acquire the highest wisdom stored up in the Scriptures.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 264.

⁵⁷ "Adhuc tenera lingua psalmis dulcibus imbuatur." Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 871.

⁵⁸ Ibid., CV, 969.

⁵⁹ Malnory, 265.

⁶⁰ Cf. Heimbucher, 1, 162.

⁶¹ Willmann, *The Science of Education in its Sociological and Historical Aspects*, transl. by F. M. Kirsch, 1, 234. Beatty, Pa. 1921.

For religious, the study of the Holy Writ was especially important, since its maxims formed the very essence of the religious life itself. To them it taught not only the truths of eternal life but also the excellence of evangelical perfection; hence, the devotion which they evinced for the study, even from the earliest days of monastic life. We have seen already how zealously St. Jerome directed the study of the Scriptures in the school of St. Marcella on the Aventine. St. Marcella and her virgins studied especially the Psalter "in its literal, spiritual and prophetic sense." Very probably they read and studied Holy Writ in the order which St. Jerome specified in his letter to Laeta; after the Psalms they were to study the Proverbs of Solomon, then the book of Job, from which they were to learn the lessons of patience; then they took up the study of the Gospels, and these they were never to lay aside. After these they read the Epistles of the Apostles, then the Prophets and historical books of the Old Testament, and finally the Canticle.⁶² St. Jerome "was most particular about the reading he allowed to nuns. Only authors generally approved were permitted. He recommended the works of Origen, Ambrose, Athanasius, Tertullian, Cyprian and Hilary," forbade however to Marcella the reading of the commentary of Rheticus, bishop of Autun, because of some doubtful matter which it contained.⁶³

The Scripture-study of St. Marcella's school on the Aventine, in the fourth century, was emulated to a greater or less degree by all convents of women throughout the early Middle Ages. The most definite account of Scripture-study in a convent of women is found in the treatise of St. Aldhelm, *De Laudibus Virginitatis*.⁶⁴ In it St. Aldhelm very vividly describes the zeal of the nuns of Barking in their study of Holy Writ. "Sometimes," he says, "you study the Prophets, sometimes the Books of the Law, 'now skilfully tracking the words of the gospel story, expounded in the mystic commentaries of the Catholic fathers, and spiritually bared to the kernel, and disposed fitly according to the four-square pattern of ecclesiastical usage, namely, according to the letter, allegory, tropology, and anagogy.'"⁶⁵ Very many similar instances could, no doubt, be related, had convents

⁶² Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 876; Campbell, *op. cit.*, XXV, 786 f.

⁶³ Campbell, *ut supra*.

⁶⁴ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, LXXXIX, 106.

⁶⁵ Quoted by Eckenstein, 113.

of women received as much notice in the writings of these centuries as did that of Barking in the writings of St. Aldhelm. General statements—as, for instance, that of the Venerable Bede, who says that St. Hilda “obliged those who were under her direction to attend so much to reading of the Holy Scriptures, and to exercise themselves so much in works of justice, that many might be there found fit for ecclesiastical duties, and to serve at the altar”;⁶⁶ or those of Agius in the ninth century, who speaks in highest praise of Hathumod’s zeal in the study of Holy Writ and her care of having her sisters do the same, evidently imply that this study was pursued with as much thoroughness in these institutions as in Barking.

How greatly the example of the school on the Aventine served to stimulate the study of the Scriptures among women can, perhaps, be best seen in the instance of Chelles. History commemorates among the members of that institution the names of Gisela, sister of Charlemagne, and abbess of the institution from 788 to 810; Gisela and Rictrude, two daughters of Charlemagne, and Columba, a princess of the English nation. Not only did these religious with their abbess assist at the lessons of Alcuin, together with the sons of the emperor, the bishops, monks and lords of the court, but they devoted themselves zealously to the study of the Scriptures under the direction of Alcuin. An assiduous correspondence united them, besides, with the spirit of the court and with him whom they loved to style their “doctor” and “teacher.” In one of the numerous letters which they addressed to him while he was abbot of St. Martin at Tours, they entreated him to write for them a commentary on the Gospel of St. John.⁶⁷ To induce Alcuin to accede to their request they reminded him of the conduct of St. Jerome towards the Roman virgins, while he dwelt at Bethlehem, and that, as he consented to favor them with similar treatises in spite of the great distance, Alcuin might in like manner consent to their request, since the distance from Tours to Paris was far less than that between Bethlehem and Rome. And Alcuin did comply with their entreaty and composed a work on the Gospel of St. John in seven books, the first five of which he addressed to

⁶⁶ *Eccles. History*, Bk. IV, Chap. 23.

⁶⁷ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Epistolae, IV, 323 ss.

Gisela—probably Gisela, the sister of Charlemagne—and Rictrude, the other two to Gisela and Columba.

It is, therefore, not surprising that writers lauded repeatedly the Scripture-knowledge of individual nuns and canonesses. So thoroughly did they at times master the Scriptures that they were not only skilled in the interpretation of them but knew them almost verbally by heart. The author of the life of St. Rusticula, nearly her contemporary, says she learned the Scriptures so readily that within a short time she committed them to memory.⁶⁸ Although this assertion of the biographer must evidently be accepted in a modified sense, it is, nevertheless, in this instance, as in a number of similar ones which have been recorded, an index of the zeal with which the study of Holy Writ was pursued in convents of women. Of St. Gertrude of Nivelles, it is said she knew the whole Bible almost literally by heart and possessed an exceptional ability in allegorical interpretation.⁶⁹ St. Lioba knew the Scriptures so well that when the young girls read them for her, and frequently made mistakes purposely in the reading, they never passed unnoticed by the saint.⁷⁰ Of St. Liutberga, her biographer says: "In sacris ergo scripturis incessanter exercebatur, et cottidie meditando quantumcumque proficiens, quousque ad profunditatem intellectus perveniens, et si imbecillitas sexus non impediret, docibilis existere potuisset."⁷¹ Not to multiply examples, we may conclude with a final reference to Heloise and her famous school at the Paraclete. Heloise possessed an extensive knowledge of the Scriptures and even enough training in theology to discuss doctrinal questions with Abelard. As abbess and teacher at the Paraclete she aroused so great an enthusiasm in her pupils for the study of Holy Writ that they had need even of the erudition of Abelard to explain to them the most obscure passages. "His *Hexameron*, or treatise on the six days of creation, which he composed for their use, shows on the one hand the zeal with which he complied on these occasions, and on the other, the care he took to explain to them what was most difficult to understand in the Scriptures."⁷²

⁶⁸ "Ut intra pauca temporum spatia Psalmos omnes disceret, et omnes Scripturas Divinas memoriter retineret." Quoted by Roger, *L'Enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin*, 425. Paris, 1905.

⁶⁹ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, II, 458; Bernoulli, 197.

⁷⁰ *Geschichtschreiber*, XIII, 66 f.

⁷¹ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Ser., IV, 159 (fol.).

⁷² *Hist. Litt.*, IX, 128 f.; Jourdain, 97.

That the study of Holy Writ, and particularly the Psalter, was an important duty for women in the world can be inferred from many indications. It is generally believed that girls, sent to convents for their education, learned at least with the elements of knowledge—reading, writing and perhaps the elements of arithmetic—also the Psalter. At times even, it seems, girls were sent to convent schools only as long as it was necessary to learn the Psalter. The Psalter, moreover, was the ordinary book of devotion for women in the world as well as in the cloister. “It is significant,” says Specht, “that the *Sachsenspiegel* mentions the ‘saltere unde alle bueche die zu gotes dinste horen, die vrowen phlegen zu lesene,’ as the inheritance of women.”⁷³ That at least the Psalter was extensively read also by the poor evidently follows from an instance recorded for the city of Regensburg. Marianus Scotus (c. a. 1074) is said to have written there many Psalters for distribution among the poor widows of the city.⁷⁴ It seems, further, most significant that Amalarius of Metz, who compiled the *Regula Sanctimonialium* for canonesses, included in his great work on *Ecclesiastical Offices*,⁷⁵ about four years later (820), the same requirements in regard to Scripture-study; young girls were to “learn the Psalter, the books of Job and Proverbs, the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles.” We have thus “direct evidence that even those who embraced a secular life were expected to receive a certain amount of education.”⁷⁶ It seems, therefore, not at all beyond the ordinary practice, at least as far as ladies of noble rank were concerned, when Theodulph of Orleans counselled the Princess Gisela to divide her time equally between reading and her household duties.⁷⁷

Logic and Rhetoric

That with reading and grammar were studied also dialectic and rhetoric, the other branches of the trivium, as well as the branches of the quadrivium, is likewise evidenced in many instances. At times, even considerable attention must have been given to the study of logic and rhetoric, for Hrotsuit (d. 925),

⁷³ Op. cit., 278 f.; Wattenbach, *Das Schriftwesen im Mittelalter*, 476. Leipzig, 1875.

⁷⁴ Ut supra.

⁷⁵ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 985 ss.

⁷⁶ Drane, 193.

⁷⁷ Cf. *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, *Poet. lat. med. aev.*, 1, 541.

fourth abbess of Gandersheim, wrote "a much esteemed treatise on logic" as well as on rhetoric, almost a century before her distinguished namesake made Gandersheim famous as a literary center.⁷⁸ Irish and Anglo-Saxon nuns were especially distinguished for their excellent education. In Anglo-Saxon convents were taught grammar, poetry and the other liberal arts. Anglo-Saxon nuns not only studied the Scriptures and commentaries on them, but even mythology and the works of the various chronologists.⁷⁹ St. Lioba, for instance, was not only thoroughly versed in the Scriptures but had, from childhood upwards, "studied grammar and the other liberal arts."⁸⁰ Not less learned appears the Anglo-Saxon nun in Heidenheim who wrote the life of Wunibald a short time after the year 761. Hrotsuit of Gandersheim shows an exceptional knowledge of the liberal arts in her dramas, besides an extensive classical training. Riccardis, her teacher, distinguished herself especially through her knowledge of dialectic and rhetoric.⁸¹ Mahilda, sister of Burchard, bishop of Worms (1000-1025), studied the computus—which every nun had to know to compute the church calendar—before she accepted the dignity of abbess. Even astronomy seems to have been included at times in the curriculum of studies, for girls at Hohenburg possessed sufficient knowledge of this science to be able to determine exactly the hour of the night from the position of the stars. Reglindis, who has been mentioned before as the reformer of this institution, and one of the most learned women of the twelfth century, taught there all the liberal arts to her pupils. Herrad, her most famous pupil, was versed as well in the quadrivium as in the trivium. "She composed songs and set them to music, solved the most complicated problems in the computation of the calendar and studied with special pleasure geometry, i. e., geography and natural history."⁸² Agnes of Weimar, likewise, had received a liberal education at Quedlinburg.⁸³ Adelheid, abbess—evidently of Vilich, near Bonn⁸⁴—who had been educated at St. Mary's of the Capitol at Cologne, was instructed in the liberal arts and, as abbess, had also her

⁷⁸ Eckenstein, 160; Putnam, 52; Drane, 295.

⁷⁹ Specht, 265.

⁸⁰ *Geschichtschreiber*, XIII, 66; Eckenstein, 137; Specht, 266.

⁸¹ Barack, op. cit., Vorrede, X f.

⁸² Specht, 271.

⁸³ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Ser., X, 142 (fol.).

⁸⁴ Cf. Hélyot, VI, 425 f.

sisters instructed in them.⁸⁵ It is indeed remarkable to find, even among women in the world, many mentioned who were, apparently, thoroughly instructed in some or all branches of the trivium and quadrivium.⁸⁶

Ars Dictandi

With language studies was generally combined the *ars dictandi* or the dictamen, i. e., composition. It was of two kinds, the dictamen prosaicum, or prose composition, and the dictamen metricum, or versification. There is abundant evidence which shows that both forms were zealously cultivated, at all times, in convents of women. The study of the dictamen metricum always preceded the study of prose forms.⁸⁷

a. Poetry

The study of versification formed, in convents of women, not only a cultural study but an agreeable pastime. Women in the cloister, as women in the world, had to dispose of much more leisure than men; for it must be remembered that even the life of high-born ladies in the world was very uniform. There were then no claims of society to distract them from the duties of the household. Means of communication were few, and consequently also the diversions of social life. This very monotony of daily life invited study and intellectual occupation; hence women in the world formed in general the cultured part of society. Similar conditions invited study in the cloister.

The study of Latin preserved to a certain degree appreciation for the classics and of poetry. Through the last Christian advocates of Latin poetry, Sidonius Apollinarius, Prudentius and Fortunatus, among others,⁸⁸ the study of poetry found entrance into the cloister. Radegund wrote poetry under the instruction of Fortunatus. "You have sent me great verses on small tablets," he wrote on one occasion; "the little poems you sent are full of pleasing earnestness; you charm our thoughts by these words."⁸⁹ Some of the moniales of the convent of Poitiers evidently excelled in the art of versification as well as music. Mention has been

⁸⁵ *Hist. Litt.*, VII, 154.

⁸⁶ Cf. *Hist., Litt.*, VII, 152 ff.; Specht, 283 ff.; *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXVI, 61; LXVII, 21; Wattenbach, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter*, 283, 338.

⁸⁷ Specht, 112 f., 263.

⁸⁸ Jourdain, 98, Rousselot, 28.

⁸⁹ Quoted by Eckenstein, 60.

made of the poetess whose poetry, set to music, became even popular songs.⁹⁰ That the art of versification was cultivated in Anglo-Saxon convents is evidenced for the seventh century by the writings of St. Aldhelm, and for the eighth by the correspondence of Anglo-Saxon nuns with St. Boniface. Aldhelm, in his treatise *De Laudibus Virginitatis*, addressed to Hildelith, abbess of Barking, and her sisters, says, in speaking of their zeal for learning: "Sometimes you carefully examine the rules of grammarians, the laws of accentuation measured by tone and time, fixed in poetic feet by marks of punctuation, that is divided into parts of verse consisting of two and a half and three and a half feet, and changed in endless variety of metre."⁹¹ Hildelith was the second abbess of Barking and is said to have received her education in France,⁹² which might be regarded as an indirect indication that similar training was given in the convent schools of France in the seventh century, for the abbess was usually the principal teacher in the institution over which she presided, as has been indicated in preceding observations. Letter twenty-three of the collection of the correspondence of St. Boniface by Jaffé,⁹³ a letter written by St. Lioba to St. Boniface, contains a specimen of the poetry of St. Lioba. She writes thus to St. Boniface: "I have composed the few verses, which I enclose according to the rules of poetic versification, not from pride but from a desire to cultivate the beginnings of learning, and now I am longing for your help. I was taught by Eadburg, who unceasingly devotes herself to this divine art."⁹⁴

How successfully the study of poetry was pursued in institutions of canonesses in Germany is shown particularly by the poetic productions of Hrotsuit of Gandersheim. Her writings are usually grouped under three headings, metrical legends, dramas written in the style of Terence, and historical compositions in metrical form. Her legends, "intended for the perusal and the edification of inmates of convents," seem to have attracted much attention at her time. The legend which commemorates the martyrdom of St. Pelagius, in particular, was widely read and gained great popularity with Spanish and

⁹⁰ Cf. Bernoulli, 86.

⁹¹ *Pat. Lat.*, LXXXIX, 106; quoted by Eckenstein, 114.

⁹² Cf. Eckenstein, 112.

⁹³ *Monumenta Moguntina*, 84.

⁹⁴ Quoted by Eckenstein, 131.

⁹⁵ Barack, XXV.

Portuguese hagiographers.⁹⁵ Her dramas are not only "the oldest and most venerable monuments of dramatic poetry in Germany," but are the only dramatic compositions "between the comedies of classic times and the miracle plays." Her historic poems consist of a history of the reign of Otto the Great, and the history of the origin of Gandersheim. While Hrotsuit ranks with the legend-writers of her time, and as a historical writer has been classed with Widukind and Ruotger, "as a writer of Latin drama she stands entirely alone" and "increases our respect for her powers and for the system of education which made the development of these powers possible."⁹⁶

For the twelfth century the study of poetry is confirmed for Hohenburg, Admont and the convent of the Paraclete in France. At Hohenburg, the abbess Reglindis wrote poetry and taught the art of versification to her pupils.⁹⁷ The *Hortus Deliciarum* of Herrad began and concluded with a long poem; both "are devoted to the admonition of the nuns. Herrad's poems are composed in different metres; some have the dignity of the hexameter, some the easier flow of shorter-lined dactylic verse. The poems addressed to her nuns are of the latter kind."⁹⁸ Evidence of poetic ability in the convent of Admont is furnished by Gertrude, the writer of the life of an anonymous "magistra." Gertrude prefaces this life with a prologue of considerable length in verse.⁹⁹ Its sentiments are filial and pathetic, and full of admiration for the magistra, who appears to have been a famous teacher as well as a dutiful superioress of the institution. In a collection of poems preserved in a manuscript dating from the beginning of the twelfth century are found also poems composed by nuns or canonesses, probably, of Regensburg. These poems show a considerable acquaintance with classic authors and skill in metrical composition; they appear to have been tasks in versification assigned to them by some scholarly friend.¹⁰⁰ Heloise passed for the best poetess of the twelfth century. However, the few fragments of her poetry that have been preserved are insufficient evidence of her poetic ability; they are interesting only as an indication of the intellectual activity of women in

⁹⁵ Eckenstein, 160 f., 183; Barack, XXXI ff.

⁹⁷ Several fragments of her poetry and that of her famous pupil Herrad are edited by Migne. *Pat. Lat.*, CXCIV, 1538 ss.

⁹⁸ Eckenstein, 253.

⁹⁹ *Analecta Boll.*, XII, 359.

¹⁰⁰ Specht, 269.

convents.¹⁰¹ Significant in this respect is the advice of the poet Baudri to his sister Agnes:

Leniat interdum curas tibi lectio sancta.

Ora, scribe, lege, carminibusque stude.

Sit tibi materies divini pagina verbi;

Ut fugias nugas, de Domino loquere.¹⁰²

Scope for the exercise of the poetic talent of religious was furnished frequently by the mortuary rolls sent from one convent to another requesting the prayers for a deceased member. The convent addressed always complied with the request, petitioning prayers in return for its deceased members, and frequently sent with this message pieces of verse in honor of the deceased.¹⁰³ The same author has collected a number of these "Rouleaux des morts," dating from the ninth to the fifteenth century. Jourdain characterizes it as "a curious collection of cloisteral poetry," frequently vulgar and of a mediocre kind, but at times also of notable perfection, especially when such verses come from the Paraclete or a convent of similar fame. From an educational point of view, they present a novel index of the degree of culture found in convents of women and of the instruction imparted to girls.¹⁰⁴ If, finally, we consider the appreciation of poetry found so frequently among women, as shown from the large amount of poetry addressed to them, or the liberal encouragement which they gave to poets, it will be clear that the study of versification formed an important part in the medieval curriculum.

b. Prose

Practice in the second form of dictamen, the dictamen prosaicum, is evident chiefly from the literary productions of the various centuries. The letters of Anglo-Saxon nuns addressed to St. Boniface are valuable not only because of the insight which they give of monastic life and customs and the nature of the relations kept up by moniales with the outside world, but chiefly as an index of the culture found in monasteries of women.¹⁰⁵ Letters, likewise, of ladies who received their education in con-

¹⁰¹ Rousselot, I, 30.

¹⁰² Jourdain, 98.

¹⁰³ Delisle, *Des Monuments Paléographiques Concernant l'Usage de Prier pour les Morts*; dans la *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, VIII, 333 ff.

¹⁰⁴ Jourdain, 99 f.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Jaffé, *Mon. Mog.*, 8 ss.

vents, as, for example, those of Queen Matilda of England to St. Anselm,¹⁰⁶ are of equal value from the educational point of view. Another form of prose composition that came from the hand of nuns or canonesses, and part of which has been preserved, are several lives of saints. That of St. Radegund, written by Baudonivia in the sixth century at Poitiers, has been pointed out as a work of considerable literary merit. It derives its particular value educationally from the fact that Baudonivia had received her education at Poitiers, from her childhood, under St. Radegund. Similarly, an account of the death of St. Cæsaria, by one of her devoted children, has been praised as a "gem of literature."¹⁰⁷ The life of St. Wunibald, written by a nun at Heidenheim, is valuable for its historical information, and although it "often falls short of the rules of grammar," it shows a determination and an earnestness of purpose which commands respect.¹⁰⁸ Dominica, a monialis of Nivelles, compiled the life of St. Gertrude, foundress of the institution, in the seventh century.¹⁰⁹ So, also, Bertha of Vilich, educated from early childhood in that institution, became the biographer of St. Adelheid, its first abbess.¹¹⁰ Giesebrecht has expressed the opinion that the older life of Queen Mathilde of Germany has been written by a nun.¹¹¹ The author of the vita of an anonymous magistra of Admont in the twelfth century has already been mentioned. It is evident, therefore, that Latin was not a sterile knowledge, since it was utilized both in the acquisition of the learning of the time and its practical application.

Writing and Miniature Painting

Nuns and canonesses, like monks, spent much of their time in the multiplication of books. The needs of every community imposed it as a duty at least on a certain number of religious. A sufficiently large number of copies of the Psalter and books necessary for Divine service had to be provided in every institution. This was the minimum requirement. In most instances, apparently, the industry and zeal of religious extended much further. To their zeal of accumulating and preserving the trea-

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, LIX, 88, 156.

¹⁰⁷ Drane, 192.

¹⁰⁸ Eckenstein, 139 ff.; Specht, 266 f.

¹⁰⁹ Rettberg, I, 564.

¹¹⁰ *Analecta Boll.*, II, 211 s.

¹¹¹ *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXI, Vorrede, V, Anmerkung 2.

tures of antiquity, as well as the invaluable productions of early Christianity, posterity owes a debt of gratitude that can hardly be overestimated.

There was apparently no period at which religious women neglected that duty. Even at the time of Eusebius young maidens are mentioned who performed the duties of copyists for learned men of that time.¹¹² The biographer of Melania the younger pictures very vividly the zeal with which Melania applied herself to provide in this respect for the needs of her community at Jerusalem.¹¹³ He tells us that she wrote a whole week at a time, making copies of the Scriptures and commentaries on the same, and that she provided each of her sisters with a Psalter and a copy of the rule.¹¹⁴

That the transcribing of manuscripts was an important occupation in the monastery of Arles in the sixth century is well known. Saint-Jean, in fact, presented a veritable studio of manuscripts which were distinguished for their correctness and the beauty of execution. Cæsaria II not only gave her sisters the example as a copyist, but instructed them herself in the art of writing. It seems not probable that these religious devoted themselves to transcribing the works of profane authors. The principles of the religious life, according to St. Cæsarius, would seem to have excluded this from the occupation of the religious for whom he was the legislator. The works which they transcribed were, in the first place, those of St. Cæsarius himself, and probably also many interesting documents of the ecclesiastical history of Gaul, and in particular of the diocese of Arles. How highly these religious treasured the books of the convent library was clearly shown when fire threatened the destruction of the monastery; their first care was the saving of the books by burying them, with some other valuables, in a dried-up cistern.¹¹⁵ Although we do not meet with any evidence of a like nature in any other of the early monasteries of Gaul, it seems very evident that Arles was not the only monastery where the work of trans-

¹¹² Putnam, 53.

¹¹³ *Analecta Boll.*, VIII, 16.

¹¹⁴ "Scribebat etiam per totam septimanam in membranis. Cum autem scribebat ipsa, una de sororibus legebat, et in tantum sensu sobrio audiebat ut etiam emendaret eam quae legebat, vel si in una littera oberrasset. Ipsa vero sine perturbatione scribebat: statutum enim habebat quantum scriberet quantumque legeret ex scripturis canonicis, necnon et interpretationibus tractatorum"; and, "legebat autem novum et vetus testamentum per annos singulos quater; scribens sufficienter, et de manibus suis praebens calciamenta sanctis, reddens etiam psalterium singulariter et regulam perficiens cum sororibus suis." *Ibid.*, 38.

¹¹⁵ Malnory, 267; Besse, *Premiers Monastères de la Gaule Meridionale*, LXXI, 446.

cribing manuscripts was pursued with ardor. The very evidence that exists of the scholarly work carried on in the institutions of Gaul during the sixth and seventh centuries presupposes that the copying of manuscripts was carried on in these institutions. The two well-known calligraphers, Harlinde and Renilde, of the Benedictine convent of Eika in Belgium, belong rather to the eighth century and furnish evidence of the perfection attained in writing and miniature painting in convents of women during that period.¹¹⁶

We have also evidence for the convent schools of England, and very favorable indications for those of Ireland, that writing, and very probably miniature painting, were taught in the convents of these countries. That Irish nuns distinguished themselves in these arts seems obvious; the perfection to which these arts attained in Ireland, as shown in the famous *Book of Kells*, or that of *Armagh*, which "stands only second to the *Book of Kells*, and occasionally exceeds it in fineness and richness of ornamentation," and other Latin-Irish books of this class, still preserved, "all belonging to the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries,"¹¹⁷ leave little room for doubt that writing and miniature painting were important occupations, principally in convents of women in Ireland. The Rule of St. Columba which prescribed that the monk should "help his brethren by giving them instruction or by writing for them," if he was able to fulfill these duties, very probably indicates in general the attitude in monasteries towards teaching and writing. The letter of St. Boniface addressed to Eadburg, abbess of the convent in Thanet, written in 732 or 735,¹¹⁸ is generally cited as evidence of the art of writing in English convents. In it St. Boniface petitions Eadburg to write for him the Epistles of St. Peter in letters of gold, so that "her words may shine in gold to the glory of the Father in heaven." Eadburg evidently "had a reputation for writing, for Lul, one of Boniface's companions sent her among other gifts a silver style (*graphium argenteum*) such as was used at the time for writing on wax tablets."¹¹⁹

Writing was usually taught in German convents during the eighth century. From canon nineteen of an edict of Charle-

¹¹⁶ Cf. Essen, 109 ff.

¹¹⁷ Joyce, *op. cit.*, I, 501 ff.

¹¹⁸ Jaffé, *Mon. Mog.*, 99.

¹¹⁹ Eckenstein, 122; Jaffé, *op. cit.*, 214.

magne, issued in 789, it appears that it was used in convents even as a frivolous pastime: "Nullatenus ibi winileodes scribere vel mittere praesumant."¹²⁰ "In Cologne Archchancellor Hildebald (d. 818) employed nine nuns for the copying of books, and this evidently happened more frequently in the tenth and eleventh centuries."¹²¹ Diemudis at the convent of Wessobrunn "wrote with her own hand many volumes in a most beautiful and legible character, both for divine service and for the public library of the monastery."¹²² Diemudis, besides, is said to have carried on "a correspondence by very sweet letters" with Herluca a nun of the neighboring convent at Eppach.¹²³ Diemudis produced her works in the beginning of the twelfth century. At the same time Leukardis, a nun of the convent of Mallersdorf was similarly renowned as a writer. In grateful acknowledgment for the services rendered by these remarkable scribes, an anniversary was established in both monasteries in their memory.¹²⁴ In Admont nuns also appear to have been specially active in the scriptorium. We find there "Irimberti abbatis commentaria in Josua, Judicum et Ruth," written by the nuns Reglindis and Irmgard, of whom are still preserved, in the library of Admont, parchment folio volumes numbering over one thousand pages. The necrologies of this institution mention also "Diemudis conversa n.c. (nostrae congregationis) et scriptrix," and Alhaid, armaria (librarian).¹²⁵ At Nonnberg in Salzburg are likewise preserved a collection of sermons written under one of its abbesses named Diemuod (d. 1135). Spiritual writers, in particular, seem to have often employed nuns and canonesses for the multiplication of their works. Brother Idung sent his remarkable dialogue between the Cluniac and Cistercian to the canonesses of Niedermünster near Regensburg, "ut legibiliter scribetur et diligenter emendetur ab aliquibus sororibus."¹²⁶ Reglindis, abbess of Hohenburg, showed evidently as much zeal for the work of the scriptorium in that institution as she had formerly as active scribe at Admont. The *Hortus Deliciarum* of Herrad is the most convincing proof of the perfection in the

¹²⁰ *Mon. Germ. Hist., Leg.*, I, 63.

¹²¹ Specht, 272; Wattenbach, *Das Schriftwesen*, 369.

¹²² Quoted by Maitland, 419; a list of her works is given, p. 420 f.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 422.

¹²⁴ Specht, 273; cf. Maitland, loc. cit.

¹²⁵ Cf. Wichner, Das ehemalige Nonnenkloster O.S.B. zu Admont. *Studien und Mitteilungen aus dem Benedictiner-Orden*, II, 288.

¹²⁶ Putnam, 54; Specht, 274.

art of designing and drawing attained in institutions of canonesses, and of religious women generally. It shows, besides, how Herrad as abbess of Hohenburg "found her life's interest in educating the young women given into her care, how anxious she was that they should be rightminded in all things and how she strove to make their studies delightful to them."¹²⁷ Agnes, abbess of Quedlinburg (1184-1203), likewise, is credited by her chronicler with the writing and illuminating of books with her own hands; a copy of the Gospels attributed to her is still preserved.¹²⁸

Household Arts

Besides studies and occupations of an intellectual character the medieval program of studies for girls assigned a very important place to training in household arts and accomplishments. No lady, whether in the world or cloister, could afford to neglect the ordinary accomplishments in spinning, weaving, sewing and embroidery. Medieval education of girls was characteristically of a domestic kind. It prepared woman in the first place for her proper sphere of activity, the management and care of a household. Daughters of kings and princes were not exempted from these duties. Thus the daughters of Charlemagne, besides following the regular courses of instruction in the palace-school, learned to spin and weave, that in these occupations they might spend their leisure hours usefully.¹²⁹ "The four princesses, the sisters of king Ethelstan, were celebrated for their skill in spinning, weaving and embroidery"; and the daughters of king Edward were educated carefully first in letters and then in the labors of the distaff and the needle.¹³⁰

In the cloister manual labor formed at all times an important occupation. "From the first monastic life had been dominated by the idea that idleness is the source of all evil." Hence monastic legislators at every period prescribed manual labor both as a means to ward off temptations and to provide the necessary diversion for religious. For nuns and canonesses this labor consisted from earliest times in the above named occupations of

¹²⁷ Eckenstein, 253.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 233.

¹²⁹ Jourdain, 86.

¹³⁰ "Hic quoque Rex filios suos literis fecit instrui, filias vero suas primo literis deinde colo et acu fecit exercitari." Polychronicon Ranulphi Higdeni. Gale, *Historiae Anglicanae Scriptores*, 111, 259. Oxoniae, 1691; Wright, *A History of Domestic Manners and Sentiments in England during the Middle Ages*, 52. London, 1862.

spinning, weaving, sewing and embroidery. The rule given by St. Jerome to Demetrias in that regard formed the rule observed in convents of women generally throughout the early Middle Ages.¹³¹ In accordance with this teaching of St. Jerome, the council of Aachen enjoined in the rule compiled for canonesses spinning and weaving as the best pastime for hours of the day not occupied by prayer.¹³² The manufacture of clothing, from the spinning of the thread to the sewing of the garment was, besides, as specifically the task of women in the cloister as it was of those living in the world. Frequently they provided not only the clothing required in the nunnery but also for the community of monks or canons, when the monastery was double.

Embroidery

Embroidery and artistic sewing, in particular, was a most attractive occupation for women in the world and in convents. In this field of labor women found ample scope for the exercise of their artistic temperament. The deep faith and devotion for religion which characterized the age offered abundant suggestions for the application of the art in the service of religion. Bock in his monumental work on liturgical vestments¹³³ gives, in volume one, most enlightening information on the embroidery of hangings for churches, altar cloths and church vestments in the convents of women. That the art was applied early to profane uses, even in convents, appears from several enactments of ecclesiastical legislation. It seems, that even at the time of St. Cæsarius moniales undertook the embroidery of secular garments, for St. Cæsarius, enjoins in his rule for virgins: "Plumaria et acupictura, et omne polymitum, vel stragula, sive ornatu^ræ, nunquam in Monasterio fiant. Ipsa etiam ornamenta in Monasterio simplicia esse debent, nunquam plumata, nunquam holoserica et nihil aliud in ipsis, nisi cruces aut nigræ, aut lactinæ tantum opere sarsurio de pannis aut linteis apponantur . . . Acupictura nunquam nisi in mappulis, et facitergiis, in quibus abbatissa jusserit, fiant."¹³⁴ The same injunction is found in the rule of St. Donatus.¹³⁵ That in English convents in the seventh century embroidery was extensively used for personal ornament is shown

¹³¹ Ep. CXXX, Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 1119.

¹³² *Ibid.*, CV, 945.

¹³³ *Geschichte der liturgischen Gewänder des Mittelalters*. Bonn, 1859.

¹³⁴ Holstenius, *Cod. reg.*, 1, 360.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 389.

by the legislation of two councils. Canon twenty of the famous council of Cloveshove (747) ordains: "Magisque legendis libris, vel canendis psalmis, quam texendis et plectendis vario colore inanis gloriæ vestibus studeant operam dare."¹³⁶ Forty years later another English council forbade to canons the wearing of rich and embroidered garments.¹³⁷ The treatise of St. Aldhelm, *De Laudibus Virginitatis*, gives evidence that vanity of dress was great in convents of women.¹³⁸ A similar state of affairs probably existed in a number of convents on the continent in the latter part of the eighth century, since we find there also a noticeable decline of the monastic spirit. At all times, however, zeal for the splendor of divine worship gave, in convents, the first place to embroidery for church purposes.

Embroidery held also a very prominent place in the daily occupations of ladies in the world, especially those of noble or royal descent. It was certainly held in high esteem in Ireland, where the Brehon Law even determined the fine to be paid for the detention or loss of an embroideress' needle. "For every woman," concludes the article, "who is an embroideress deserves more profit than even queens."¹³⁹ St. Patrick and St. Columbkille are known to have employed embroideresses for the making and ornamenting of church vestments; and it is known "from many ancient authorities that Irish ladies of the highest rank practised needle-work and embroidery as an accomplishment and recreation."¹⁴⁰ English ladies were exceptionally skillful in embroidery. "English girls are spoken of in the life of St. Augustine as employed in skilfully ornamenting the ensigns of the priesthood and of royalty with gold, and pearls and precious stones." So famous did this particular kind of embroidery become in England that it became known, by way of distinction, as "English work" (*Anglicum opus*). Ladies of royal rank gloried in devoting their skill to the embroidery of church vestments and other church ornaments. Embroidery seems to have become, even at an early date, a special avocation of some ladies in the world. It is related by the early historian of Ely that an Anglo-Saxon lady who wished to lead a retired life was assigned by the religious of that monastery a place in the neigh-

¹³⁶ Hadden and Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents*, III, 369.

¹³⁷ Cf. Bock, I, 153.

¹³⁸ Cf. Eckenstein, 115.

¹³⁹ Joyce, *op. cit.*, II, 325.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 366.

borhood where she devoted herself with young girls to embroidery and weaving, in which arts she excelled.¹⁴¹ The previous mention of the abuse of the art of embroidery in religious houses is evidently an indication that it was employed on a much larger scale for the ornamentation of dresses by ladies in the world. Indeed, the extravagance in dress displayed by the laity in the latter part of the twelfth century called forth the censures even of ecclesiastical councils, as, for instance, that of Montpellier.¹⁴²

From the importance attached to the accomplishment in household arts and artistic needlework, followed the necessity of instructing girls carefully in all that pertained to these occupations. From early youth girls received, therefore, in convent schools instruction in embroidery and other feminine accomplishments. The biographer of Harlinde and Renilde says that the instruction which these ladies had received in the convent of Valenciennes included also that in feminine arts.¹⁴³ St. Liutberga (d. 870), educated in one of the two small Saxon convents, one of which, Wendhausen, gave rise to the famous institution of Quedlinburg, excelled in artistic needlework and weaving. To her, while leading the life of a recluse, St. Ansgar sent young girls to be instructed in the Psalter and in embroidery.¹⁴⁴ The biographer of Queen Mathilde of Germany says expressly that Mathilde was entrusted, as a girl, to the nuns of Herford to be instructed not only in book-knowledge, but also in useful arts.¹⁴⁵ More eloquently, however, than the few direct statements that mention the instruction of girls in household arts in convents, speak the various artistic products, still preserved, of the zeal and endurance with which religious women devoted themselves to the training of girls in these accomplishments.

Medical Training

The medieval program for the training of girls included further training in the elements of medical treatment and the preparation and care of restoratives, drugs, ointments and the like. The

¹⁴¹ *Historia Eliensis*. Gale, *Hist. Angl. Scriptores*, III, 508; cf. Wright, *Womankind in Western Europe*, 60. London, 1869; Bock, I, 140 ff.

¹⁴² Wright, *ut supra*, 105.

¹⁴³ "Simili etiam modo in universi operis arte, quod manibus feminarum diversis modis ac varia compositione fieri solet, honestissime fuerant instructae, videlicet nendo et texendo, creando et suendo: in auro quoque ac margaritas in serico componendis, miris in modis exstiterant perfectae opifices." Quoted by Essen, 109 f.

¹⁴⁴ "Puellas eleganti forma transmiserat, quas illa et in psalmodiis et in artificiosis operibus educaverat, et edoctas libertate concessa seu ad propinquos, sive quo vellent, ire permisit." *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., IV, 164 (fol.); Eckenstein, 147; Specht, 281.

¹⁴⁵ *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXI, 7.

study of medicine and first aids in medical treatment entered so thoroughly in woman's sphere of action during the Middle Ages that no woman could lay claim to a complete education without at least an elementary knowledge of the science of medicine and surgery. There were many more demands in this regard on the medieval woman than there are in modern times. There were then but few professional physicians and frequently at such a distance that their aid could not be easily procured. In cases of emergency, when a sick wayfarer, pilgrim or knight wounded in the tournament or battle required immediate treatment, it was the duty of woman to be the nurse and doctor. The care of the sick, as well as of the poor, was during those ages, too, considered a duty of charity incumbent on every Christian, especially those in the service of religion. Every religious house was then a hospital as well as a school. It will be remembered that in institutions of canonesses the rule ordained that there should be a hospital erected outside the regular enclosure for the care of the sick and the reception of travelers;¹⁴⁶ it was the general provision found in religious institutions throughout the early Middle Ages.¹⁴⁷

It is true that historians do not record the names of many women distinguished for their knowledge of medicine, but this is true also in other departments of knowledge and therefore not remarkable. It is rather from observations as those preceding that we have to form our estimate of the importance of the study of medicine as a part of the medieval curriculum for the training of girls. A few instances, however, of women remarkable for their knowledge of medicine are recorded and are valuable as examples for illustration. Aemilia Hilaria, aunt of Ausonius, made the study of medicine her special vocation.¹⁴⁸ Irish legends frequently mention female physicians; which Joyce considers a fact worthy of remark, since there was evidently some foundation for the statement.¹⁴⁹ Aeneas Sylvius, afterwards Pius II, mentions in his history of Bohemia, chapter four, a daughter of Duke Crocus renowned for her knowledge of medicine in the eighth or ninth century.¹⁵⁰ As early as the eleventh and twelfth

¹⁴⁶ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 972.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Mozans, *Women in Science*, 274 f. London, 1913; Jacobius, 45 ff.; Eckenstein, 287 ff.

¹⁴⁸ Denk, 170.

¹⁴⁹ *Social History of Ancient Ireland*, I, 604, 621.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Harless, *Die Verdienste der Frauen um Naturwissenschaft und Heilkunde*, 142. Göttingen, 1830.

centuries, several women gained considerable distinction in the famous medieval school of Salerno, especially Trotula of Ruggerio, "whose reputation at that period was world-wide."¹⁵¹ In the convent of the Paraclete the infirmarian had to know medicine, for it was she who was charged with the preparation of remedies. Marguerite and Poncie, nieces of Peter the Venerable, and religious of Marcigni, also knew medicine and made use of their knowledge in restoring their uncle to health.¹⁵² More famous than any religious in the knowledge of medicine was undoubtedly St. Hildegard, abbess of the Benedictine convent of Bingen on the Rhine. The *Physica*, one of the two medical works composed by her, has been characterized by Rudolph Virchow, the famous scientist, as an early "materia medica, curiously complete considering the age to which it belongs"; and Dr. F. A. Reuss, of the University of Würzburg, at the conclusion of his Prolegomena to the *Physica* says: "It is certain that Hildegard was acquainted with many things of which the doctors of the Middle Ages were ignorant, and which the investigators of our own age, after rediscovering them, have announced as something entirely new."¹⁵³

Etiquette

A very important place in the medieval curriculum was finally given to the training in "moralitas," i. e., social forms of etiquette or refinement in manners. Especially during the latter part of the feudal period and the period of chivalry, the training in refinement and manners assumed such an important part in the training of girls of the nobility and higher classes that it came to be regarded as the very index of a girl's education. Only when a girl's conduct was in keeping with all demands of etiquette could the appellation *cortois* be applied to her, and *cortoisie* became finally the end of her education.¹⁵⁴ Although during the period of romance and chivalry the training of girls of the nobility in the "moralitas," "morâliteit," or "cortoisie"—the various names applied to the forms of decorum demanded by the rules of social intercourse—was very frequently given by special mistresses in courts and castles, much of this training

¹⁵¹ Cf. Bolton, *Early Practice of Medicine by Women*, 7 f. London, 1881.

¹⁵² *Hist. Litt.*, IX, 191 f.

¹⁵³ S. Hildegardis, *Physica*, Prolegomena. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXC VII, 1122; quoted by Mozans, 279.

¹⁵⁴ Jacobius, 15; Specht, 289 f.

was undoubtedly given also in convents. In the institutions of canonesses, in particular, whose relations with the nobility were in most instances very direct, training in etiquette was a distinct feature of the educational program.¹⁵⁵

The importance attached to faultless deportment in the training of girls is shown especially in the treatises on etiquette, several of which were compiled towards the end of the period here treated. The first in the order of time seems to be an old French poem, *Le livre des Manières*, by Etienne de Fougère, written about 1170. His ideal of woman is expressed in the following lines:

"Bone fame est moult haut chose
De bien faire pas ne repose,
De bien dire partot s' alose
Bien conseilier et bien fere ose."¹⁵⁶

The *Ensenhamen* of Garin lo Brun, probably written about the same time, consists of 650 lines of verse and is addressed to women of the nobility; it treats principally of the appearance of woman and the manner in which she ought to conduct herself on all occasions.¹⁵⁷ The main teaching of the *Ensenhamen* on etiquette reappears in *Der Waelsche Gast* of Thomas of Zirclaria, written in high German about the year 1215. *The Winsbekin*, a short didactic poem in middle-high German, of about the same date, contains the advice of a mother to her daughter.¹⁵⁸ Some of her rules on good conduct are as follows:

"Trut kint, du solt sîn hôchgemut
und dar under in zühten leben,
So wirt dîn lop den werden guot,
und stât dîn rosenkranz dir eben,
Den êre gernden soltu geben
mit zühten dînen senften gruoze,
und lâ in deinem herzen sweben
scham und mât ûf staeten pîn;
schiuz wilder blicke niht ze vil,
swâ lôse merker bi dir sîn.
Scham unde mâtze sint zwô tugent,

¹⁵⁵ Schäfer, 173.

¹⁵⁶ Quoted by Hentsch, *De la Littérature didactique du Moyen Age s' Addressant spécialement aux Femmes*, 42 ff. Halle, 1903.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 45 ff.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 45 ff.

die gebent uns frouwen hôhen prîs:
 Lât si Got leben in diner jugent,
 so gruonet dûner selden rês.¹⁵⁹

Summarized, the chief rules of conduct may be said to have consisted in modesty and polite manners. Pleasing manners, noble speech and a pure mind are the qualities that are to characterize the well educated girl or woman. Of the individual rules, the following are generally mentioned: No woman may touch what has been touched by the hand of an unknown gentleman; to look fixedly at a gentleman is a mark of indecorum; every gentleman, whether rich or poor, is always to be greeted politely; in public a lady is to appear modestly dressed; her step is to be measured, must be neither too large nor too small; and her walk is to be marked by a certain gravity. A lady was always expected to rise when a gentleman approached, even if she was a princess. Her conduct at table was especially to be marked by great reserve. Loquacity and forwardness in manners, speaking too loud or too quickly, loud laughter and cursing were considered unbecoming to a lady, since they disfigure gracefulness and gentleness without which there is no true womanliness. Daughters of princes were besides admonished to practice the virtue of liberality.¹⁶⁰

The comprehensiveness of the medieval curriculum of studies might further be shown by enlarging on various features of individual studies, as, for instance, the training comprised in the study of music, or chant, or the knowledge demanded for the proper recitation of the Divine Office. However, what has been said suffices to show that the education of girls was at times of a considerably advanced type. It is true that the medieval program for the education of girls, in its most comprehensive form, is the exception, yet it proves the opportunities that woman might enjoy, and that, undoubtedly, many did enjoy, of whose accomplishments history has preserved no record. From several indications, also, as, for instance, the mention of the charitable zeal of Marianus Scotus at Regensburg, who provided many poor ladies of that city with a Psalter, and several others of a similar nature, we are evidently justified to draw favorable conclusions

¹⁵⁹ Schumann, *Kleinere Schriften über pädagogische und kulturgeschichtliche Fragen*, Erstes Heft, 114. Hanover, 1878.

¹⁶⁰ Compare the analyses of the above named treatises by A. Hentsch; Schumann, 115 f.; Schultz, *Das höfische Leben zur Zeit der Minnesinger*, I, 198, 422 ff. Leipzig; 1889; Jacobius, 15 ff.

even for the educational attainments of the lower classes. The following pages on method and discipline will further illustrate certain features of the educational program for girls.

3. *Methods and Discipline*

The influence of the theories of St. Jerome on feminine education in the early Middle Ages has been regarded so considerable that writers of educational history, Denk among others, have not hesitated to call him the Fénelon of the early Christian Church.¹⁶¹ How widely his pedagogical principles affected the education of women during the Middle Ages can perhaps be best seen from the medieval treatises bearing on the education of women. It is not only interesting but also very instructive to note, for instance, to what extent St. Jerome's theory entered into the *Regula Sanctimonialium*, or rule for canonesses; the educational regulations of this rule are essentially the theories devised by St. Jerome, considerable sections of which are embodied even literally. What must be considered of special significance is, that the author calls expressly attention to the fact that the method of training to be followed in educating girls is that prescribed by St. Jerome in his letter to Læta.¹⁶² That the educational theories of St. Jerome influenced educational thought and practice throughout the succeeding centuries, is clearly seen from the treatise of Vincent of Beauvais, *De eruditione filiorum regalium*, or Manual on the Instruction of Princes, written in the thirteenth century; the treatise of the learned Dominican Peraldus, *De eruditione principum*—which has been ascribed to St. Thomas Aquinas¹⁶³—of which the last nineteen chapters are devoted to the training of girls, and the treatise of Juan Luis Vives, *On the Instruction of a Christian Woman*. The ten last chapters of the first work named, which treat of the education of women, "refer a good deal to the domestic lessons of the Old Testament and to the maxims of St. Jerome addressed to his learned and cultivated female friends and disciples."¹⁶⁴ Vives, in his treatise on the education of a Christian woman, which "is

¹⁶¹ Denk, 173 f.

¹⁶² "Sed qui modus hujuscemodi erudiendis tenendus sit, beatus Hieronymus in epistola, quam ad Laetam de institutione filiae scripsit plenissime docet." Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 969.

¹⁶³ This treatise is found among the smaller works of St. Thomas (*Opusculum XXXVII*), and is also edited in the *Bibliothek der katholischen Pädagogik*, III, 213 ff.

¹⁶⁴ Murphy, "Mediaeval Female Education in Germany," *The Catholic World*, XXXIII, 385.

the leading theoretical manual on women's education of the sixteenth century, not only for England and the English, for whom it was primarily produced, but also for the whole of Europe,"¹⁶⁵ embodies many principles of St. Jerome on infant training, physical exercise, moral discipline and the qualifications of those entrusted with the training of children, in the first twelve chapters.¹⁶⁶ Any treatment, therefore, on the medieval method of educating girls must necessarily give to the educational principles of St. Jerome a place demanded generally by pedagogical theories which form the basis of an educational system.¹⁶⁷

St. Jerome distinguishes two periods in the training of a child: the period of infancy, to the age of seven, and the period of childhood, to the age of twelve. In general it may be observed that St. Jerome advocates the same training for boys and girls, and that while he follows the generally accepted Christian principles for the training of girls, he is, at the same time, greatly influenced by the educational theories of Quintilian.¹⁶⁸

St. Jerome requires, in the first place, that during the period of infancy, when the child is confronted with the important task of acquiring a language, much attention should be given to correct pronunciation, for that cannot be considered unimportant "without which great things cannot come to pass." He emphasizes the fact that faulty habits, in this respect as in others, formed during childhood are difficult to correct later—as history and experience prove—and he cites in proof of it the instance of Alexander who could not correct his manners and walk acquired under the tutorship of Leonidas. Although the girl is incapable at this period of any serious application to work or study, she shall nevertheless be introduced to it. She shall, for instance, be taught to shape the thread, even if she as often breaks it, "that by this practice she may learn to avoid it later,"¹⁶⁹ for it is important to stimulate a child's interest at an early age for the kind of work she will be called upon to do. That work may not become a task, it should be followed by

¹⁶⁵ Watson, *Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women*, Introduction, 21. London, 1912.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. pages 39 to 102.

¹⁶⁷ In connection with the following brief analysis, compare McCormick, "St. Jerome on the Education of Girls." *The Catholic Educational Review*, XII, 385 ff.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Ernesti, *Sammlung der bedeutendsten pädagogischen Schriften aus alter und neuer Zeit*, Bd. III, 6, 15 ff.; id., *Aus Seminar und Schule*, 120 f.

¹⁶⁹ *Ad Gaudentium*, 2.

play. According to the theory of Quintilian, she is to receive during this period also the first lessons in reading,¹⁷⁰ in which the objective method should be used: "Let her have letters made of box and ivory," he says, "and learn to call them by their proper names; these will amuse her, and thus amusement will become instruction. And let her not only know the letters in their order, so as to repeat their names by rote, but change the order frequently, mixing the middle with the first and the last with the middle till she can recognize them by sight as well as by sound."¹⁷¹ Much care should be taken in the first steps of learning or handwork that the child does not acquire a dislike for them: "Let her love what she is obliged to learn, so that it may not be a task but an amusement, not necessity but choice."¹⁷² Her efforts in learning may be encouraged with little rewards, such as sweets, flowers, attractive ornaments, toys and the like.¹⁷³

While St. Jerome maintains that a pleasurable attitude towards learning is necessary also during the second period of childhood, the method of instructing and training is to assume a more serious character. Reading must now be pursued on a more systematic plan. The subject matter, furnished by the Scriptures, is to be carefully selected with regard to the age and training of the girl.¹⁷⁴ The practice of writing is to begin, according to Quintilian, with the formation of letters, followed by their combination into syllables and finally into words. "When her trembling hand," he says, "begins to hold a pen, let its tender joints be guided by the hand of another placed over hers, or else let the letters be engraved upon a tablet so that she may trace out their forms without wandering from the lines of the engraving. Induce her to put syllables together by rewards."¹⁷⁵ Exercises in composition are to be well chosen from the beginning; practice in the formation of sentences should be based on the names of the Old and New Testament, "in order that what serves a present purpose may beforehand aid the memory."¹⁷⁶ St. Jerome makes no mention of the study of arithmetic in either of his two letters. He lets us see, however, in his letter

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Ernesti, *Aus Seminar und Schule*, 43.

¹⁷¹ *Ep. ad Laetam*, 2.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁷³ *Ut supra*.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 2; cf. Ernesti, *Aus Seminar und Schule*, 45.

¹⁷⁶ *Ut supra*.

to Lucinus that it was of considerable importance in domestic affairs: "Cauta rei familiaris dispensatio, et ad calculos rediens, non cito deponitur."¹⁷⁷ In the study of languages, Greek is to precede the study of Latin, as Quintilian prescribes.¹⁷⁸ Since spinning and weaving are a girl's chief domestic occupations, she is to receive a careful training in these arts.¹⁷⁹ St. Jerome excludes distinctly the study of instrumental music from the program of studies for girls; "let her be deaf," he says, "for all musical instruments; she shall not even know the purpose of such instruments as the flute, lyre and zither."¹⁸⁰ Yet it is evident that he does not include in this prohibition the accomplishment in vocal music, for he wishes that Paula be instructed early in the sweet melodies of psalmody.¹⁸¹ With the exception of this prescription as to the study of music, St. Jerome does not speak of the higher education of girls. It is the elementary education which he purposes to define and to direct.

According to St. Jerome, class-teaching is to be preferred to individual instruction, because of the advantages it offers for imitation and emulation. "Let her have companions," he says, "with whom she may vie, through the praise of whom she may be stimulated."¹⁸² St. Jerome follows in this and in the importance which he attaches to memorizing the teaching of Quintilian.¹⁸³ He advises that Pacatula learn by heart the Psalter as soon as she arrives at the age of discretion, and that during the course of her training, which he expects to be completed at the age of twelve, she commit to memory the books of Solomon, the Gospels, the Epistles of the Apostles and the writings of the Prophets.¹⁸⁴

His main educational principles in the moral training of a child are prevention and substitution. Paula must not see nor become acquainted with what might be a temptation for her. This is to be observed in the choice of her companions,¹⁸⁵ in regard to her food and amusements.¹⁸⁶ Besides this negative principle, St. Jerome urges that the tendency to vice ought to

¹⁷⁷ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 610.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Ernesti, *Sammlung der bedeutendsten pädagogischen Schriften*, 22; *Ad Laetam*, 7.

¹⁷⁹ *Ad Laetam*, 8.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁸² *Ut supra.*

¹⁸³ Ernesti, *Aus Seminar und Schule*, 53, 71.

¹⁸⁴ *Ad Gaudentium*, 3.

¹⁸⁵ *Ad Laetam*, 2.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

be overcome by the love fostered for virtue, according to the words of the psalmist, "turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it" (Ps. 36, 37). It is not sufficient to find peace, but it must be pursued with fervor. Obedience holds the foremost place among the virtues proper to childhood; a sign from the mother Pacatula is to regard as of much importance as the spoken word, and her admonitions as if they were commands. "Let her love her as mother, be submissive to her as her mistress and fear her as her teacher."¹⁸⁷ He recognizes the harm resulting from antipathy towards studies and counsels great discretion, lest "the antipathy formed in childhood extend also beyond these years."¹⁸⁸ Although his method of training appears in several respects severe, it must also be noted that St. Jerome wisely permits and counsels moderation; regard for the capacities and needs of the child is advised, not only in study and work, but also in exercises of devotion and discipline.¹⁸⁹

St. Jerome attaches great importance to the influence of example in child-training. Parents in particular have in this respect a great responsibility towards their children. In his letter to Læta he says: "You must be her governess and the model of her untutored infancy; take care that she sees nothing in you or in her father which she would be wrong in doing. Remember that you are her parents, and that she learns more from your example than your voice. Flowers are soon dead; the violet, and the lily, and the crocus soon fade in an unwholesome air."¹⁹⁰ From this principle also follows the duty of parents to exercise a constant vigilance over their children, and to keep them from associating with children and youths who might, by their words and example, harm the innocence of the child.¹⁹¹ Teachers and nurses share with parents the duty to give good example to the child with whose education they are entrusted. For this reason parents must choose with care persons of advanced years, tried conduct and erudition whom they entrust with the rearing of their child.¹⁹² Finally, recognizing the difficulty of training a child according to the plan he had outlined, in an unfavorable environment, such as Roman society was at

¹⁸⁷ *Ad Gaudentium*, 3.

¹⁸⁸ *Ad Laetam*, 2.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 2, 6.

¹⁹⁰ *Ad Laetam*, 7.

¹⁹¹ *Ad Laetam*, loc. cit.; *Ad Gaudentium*, 3.

¹⁹² *Ad Laetam*, 2; *ad Gaudentium*, 3.

that time, he advised Læta to place her little daughter, Paula, in the convent of her grandmother, St. Paula, at Bethlehem, to be educated in the midst of virgins equally consecrated to God.¹⁹³ This recommendation of St. Jerome, as well as the teaching of St. John Chrysostom,¹⁹⁴ are instances which prove that convents were the recognized educational institutions from the very beginning of monastic life.

These principles of St. Jerome, directing the education of girls, the author of the rule for canonesses wishes to be followed. Other lessons of pedagogical significance on principles and methods of training, supplementing those found in the letters to Læta and Gaudentius, are drawn from the letter of St. Jerome to Demetrius. Particularly noteworthy is that having reference to the discipline of the body. "While curbing the desires of the flesh by fasting," he says, "you must keep sufficient strength to read the Scripture, to sing Psalms, and observe vigils. For fasting is not a complete virtue in itself, but only a foundation on which other virtues may be built."¹⁹⁵ His direction to Demetrius on manual work is literally cited, as also that which cautions care in the choice of companions. In regard to the latter, he says: "Choose for your companions staid and serious women, persons of approved conversation, of few words, and of holy modesty. Shun gay and thoughtless girls who deck their heads and wear their hair in fringes."¹⁹⁶ A further lesson on the necessity of good example is drawn from the letter of St. Cæsarius to Oratoria, for the direction of those who are entrusted with the instruction of souls (*ductrices animarum*): "*præbe exemplum bonorum operum vitæque tuæ velut pennatum animal ad altum semper per desiderium evolet, per verbum resonet, luceat per exemplum.*"¹⁹⁷ The rule, finally, insists that the young be trained to respect those advanced in years, while those advanced in years should form the young to a virtuous life by word and example.¹⁹⁸

According to this program, we may believe that the training of girls was usually conducted in convents. That it is prescribed for institutions of canonesses is evidently no innovation, but

¹⁹³ *Ad Lætiam*, 11.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. McCormick, *History of Education*, 78.

¹⁹⁵ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 945.

¹⁹⁶ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 945.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 960.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 963.

rather a particular application of long-standing customs in religious institutions of women generally, and even, to a considerable extent, of those observed in the education of girls under parental supervision. It has been shown that the curriculum of studies for girls included at an early date also the study of profane writers and some or all of the liberal arts; studies which St. Jerome, apparently, did not approve for girls. "Do not desire," he writes to Eustochium, "to appear eloquent, do not devote yourself much to the writing of poetry. . . . What has Horace in common with the Psalter, Virgil with the Gospel and Cicero with the Apostle?"¹⁹⁹ We do not, therefore, obtain any information on the procedure of the higher education of girls from these sources, but must rely on the undoubtedly well founded statements of historians. "As the method of instruction for nuns," says Specht, for instance, "was in general the same as that employed in institutions of learning for the clergy, so was there in the method and manner of instructing girls no deviation from the pedagogical principles which prevailed in the schools for boys. The same strict vigilance over youth, the same discipline and the same division of school hours were observed also in the convents of women."²⁰⁰

The study of grammar held, probably, always the most important place among the studies of the trivium in convents of women, even when the study of logic gained the precedence over grammar during the scholastic period. Its study began, it seems, soon after children had learned to read the Psalter. With the study of grammar was combined an extensive course of reading. Poets were read before the prose-writers, since poetry is more easily memorized, and a choice selection of Latin expressions more rapidly acquired. The first book generally read, since the eleventh century, was the *Fables of Aesop*. A collection of morals in verse, the *Distichs of Cato*, were held in great favor because of their content and because they were easily translated. Of the classic poets, Virgil was usually read first, for the study of whom the grammar texts of Donatus and Priscian had been an excellent preparation, Priscian alone giving in his grammar seven hundred examples from Virgil. The reading of the poets was accompanied at the same time by a study in versification; much

¹⁹⁹ Ep. XXII. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 416.

²⁰⁰ Op. cit., 274.

attention was paid to the analysis of metre and the correct accentuation of syllables in reading. Pupils were required to make practical use of their knowledge of versification by producing short verses of their own; skill in this respect, especially the ability to answer appropriately in verse on any occasion, was valued as a great accomplishment. Hazecha, treasurer of the Institution of Quedlinburg, was even required to produce a poem on St. Christopher, as a test of efficiency, when she had completed her course of instruction under Bishop Balderich of Speier (970–986).²⁰¹ Teachers made the study of poetry and prose works interesting to children by an inquiry into the details of the life of the author, by an enumeration and characterization of his other works, and by briefly outlining the content of the work to be read. Although children were required to give evidence of having understood what had been read, as, for instance, to reproduce verse in simple prose, understanding of the subject matter was very frequently subordinated to control of the exterior form, and efficiency in the use of the Latin tongue. Composition exercises were always given in connection with grammar. Pupils were required to express their thoughts in well-ordered form, both in verse and prose; hence the two forms of dictamen, the dictamen prosaicum and the dictamen metricum, which have been spoken of under studies. When pupils were well versed in grammar, had read the poets, which were usually required to be read, and were acquainted with the technique of versification, they began the study of rhetoric and dialectic; it seems very probable, however, that these studies received much less attention in convents of women than in the schools of monks and canons. Rhetoric and dialectic were usually studied together. With the course in rhetoric was probably combined the reading of collections of laws, and with dialectic was practised the art of disputation.²⁰² Because of the rareness and costliness of books, instruction was to a great extent oral, and pupils had to depend frequently on the notes taken from the lessons of their teachers. "We know for certain that not only grammar, but rhetoric and the explanation of classic authors were taught orally, rules and examples being thus dictated and learned by frequent repetition."²⁰³

²⁰¹ Specht, 27.

²⁰² Cf. Specht, 93–126; McCormick, *History of Education*, 101 f.; Denk, 231 ff.

²⁰³ Drane, 181.

Although the trivium was regarded as the foundation for theological studies, education was considered incomplete without the knowledge of the quadrivium. The studies of the quadrivium had always been considered exceptionally difficult and therefore probably only the most talented and ambitious pupils studied it entirely. Music, however, which was taught in a very practical way, while the elements and the trivium were studied, as well as the elements of astronomy and arithmetic necessary for the computation of the church calendar, were taught in every convent. The beginnings of arithmetic, counting and the presentation of numbers with the fingers, which demanded much practice for a ready and practical application, must have been studied already in the elementary school. The representation of numbers by means of Latin letters made the study of arithmetic a most difficult and complex problem even for the fundamental processes. The study of astronomy seems to have been frequently pursued with special zeal and interest. "At night, when the stars shone in all their brightness in the firmament, the teacher observed with his pupils the oblique courses of the stars in every section of the heavens; he showed them how to determine the hours of the night by the position of the stars in the course of their rising and setting, the knowledge of which was of special use to those who gave in convents the sign for the night offices."²⁰⁴ Geometry received least attention of the studies of the quadrivium because of its little practical use. Although the theorems of Euclid were not unknown, it was rather a study in geography which became useful for Bible-study.²⁰⁵

The order of the day in convents, and consequently the school-hours, were determined by the hours of the Divine Office. Prime was always sung at sunrise and Vespers at sunset, which necessarily changed the class-hours. Children who prepared for the religious life probably always joined in the Divine Office, while pupils who would return to a secular life seem not to have been required to attend the choir regularly. School hours began after the Prime and lasted till Tierce. Prime was sung between eight and ten o'clock, according to the season of the year. Tierce was followed by the Mass of the day at which all assisted. Sext was sung at noon. After dinner all retired until None, which

²⁰⁴ Specht, 138.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Specht, 127 ff.; McCormick, 102; Willmann, 214 ff.; Denk, 237 ff.

was celebrated in summer at four and in winter at two o'clock. All were obliged to rest during this time, reading or studying in bed being strictly forbidden. At a given sign all arose and prepared for the singing of the None. After None, classes were resumed until Vespers. Children also assisted at the night offices, Nocturns and Matins, which were sung in winter shortly after two o'clock. The time spent in study and instruction in the inner school amounted probably to about six hours.²⁰⁶

For teaching, children were grouped into classes and taught in different rooms, if they were numerous, otherwise they were taught together in the same room. No pupil was permitted to leave his class without the consent of the teacher and follow a higher course. The teacher supervised the study-period, during which he was forbidden to write, "lest his attention might be withdrawn from the pupils." The tasks of pupils were graded with notes, and emulation appears to have been greatly encouraged.²⁰⁷ Cæsarius of Heisterbach (d. 1240) speaks of two little girls raised in a convent who tried incessantly to surpass each other. When one of them became seriously ill, she called for the prioress and promised her six denars if, meanwhile, she would not permit the other girl to continue her studies.²⁰⁸ It seems probable that in the institutions of canonesses girls frequently received, besides class-instruction, private lessons from individual sanctimoniales.²⁰⁹ This was evidently the case in all instances where canonesses had their nieces with them.

Because of the importance attached to good manners and morals, boys as well as girls were kept under constant and diligent supervision. "Whither soever children go," says the constitution of Lanfranc, "a teacher must always be with two children."²¹⁰ Similarly, the *Regula Sanctimonialium* enjoins that little girls be brought up with the most vigilant solicitude (*vigilantissime curæ studio*) lest the bad habits acquired through want of discipline be found almost impossible to be corrected.²¹¹ The *Regula cujusdam Patris*, an ancient rule for virgins, from which the *Regula Sanctimonialium* has borrowed this teaching, says: "Infantes in Monasterio quanta cura et disciplina sint

²⁰⁶ Cf. Specht, 164, ff.; Drane, 185 ff.

²⁰⁷ Specht, 162 ff.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 264.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Schäfer, 173.

²¹⁰ Holstenius, II, 379.

²¹¹ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CV, 969.

enutriendæ, multis didicimus documentis. Debent enim nutriri cum omni pietatis affectu, et disciplinæ ministerio: ne desidïæ vel lasciviæ vitio sub tenera ætate maculatæ, aut vix, aut nullatenus possint corrigi.”²¹² For this reason, the same regula continues, the little ones are to be entrusted to an elderly nun of tried virtue who will not permit them to indulge in the follies of youth; by whose discipline they will always be restrained and trained in the fear and love of God for the service of religion. They shall be taught to apply themselves diligently to spiritual reading and be instructed from childhood in everything useful. In the refectory they are to have a separate table placed near that of the senior sisters, two or more of whom shall be seated with them, “ut semper timore anteposito, sub metu seniorum nutriantur.” The hours of recreation and sleep are to be appointed by the abbess.²¹³ Supervision, indeed, extended to every detail of child-life in the monastery; not only did the teachers supervise the study-period,²¹⁴ but they also conducted their pupils to and from church,²¹⁵ supervised their hours of rest,²¹⁶ and undoubtedly also their hours of play and recreation.

To accustom children from their earliest years to the rigor of monastic discipline, to subdue and overcome their evil habits, a rigorous discipline was employed in the training of both sexes. The rod played as important a rôle in medieval education as it did in ancient. It was, in fact, “so generally used that under the form of the ferule it afterwards became the badge of the bachelor in arts, and was solemnly delivered to him when he took his degree.”²¹⁷ Misdemeanor in girls was punished with as much severity as that committed by boys. While St. Adellheid of Vilich treated her pupils with great affection and kindness, she also punished the slothful with a harshness for which her tender heart often reproached her. “She sometimes visited the offenders with rods and sometimes with a good box on the ear. The latter chastisement was even inflicted in choir when her pupils sang out of tune.”²¹⁸ Corporal punishment was entirely in keeping with the character and spirit of the age, and was not even excluded from the training of girls belonging to the

²¹² Holstenius, I, 404.

²¹³ Ut supra.

²¹⁴ Specht, 163.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 165.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 167.

²¹⁷ Drane, 177.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 192.

highest nobility. Of St. Cunigunde it is said she gave her niece sometimes:

“ . . . einen guten strich
an ihr rechte wange.
daz ôr sûste ir lange.
sie tet ir diz ze guote
in harte sanftem muote.”²¹⁹

In spite of the rigid discipline that prevailed in convents of women, we find a number of instances which show that the relations between teachers and pupils were of a cordial and even affectionate nature. The instance of the novices at Wimborne, who showed their detestation for the excessive severity of their mistress by jumping and dancing upon her tomb, “as if to tread under foot her detested corpse,”²²⁰ is an isolated occurrence and can evidently not be regarded as an indication of the general attitude which existed between teachers and pupils. Much more frequently we find intimations that suggest a filial devotedness of pupils towards their teachers. With what tenderness and affection does, for instance, Baudonivia speak of St. Radegund,²²¹ Bertha of St. Adelheid of Vilich,²²² Hrotsuit of Gandersheim of Riccardis and Gerberg, her teachers,²²³ and Gertrude of Admont of an anonymous magistra of that institution.²²⁴ Many other instances might be cited where girls showed the greatest attachment to the institution where they had received their education,²²⁵ and on the part of teachers the greatest devotion towards the pupils whom they instructed. What affection and devotion towards her sisters and pupils does not, for example, Herrad show in her great work, the “Garden of Delights.” It certainly proves that, as a teacher, she did her utmost to make studies pleasurable for her pupils. The poems, besides, which are addressed in this work to her sisters bespeak sentiments of kindness, love and esteem that could hardly be questioned.²²⁶ A very interesting and pleasing picture of a medieval school is obtained from the *Regula Beati Aelredi* for recluses. On the point of discipline

²¹⁹ Schultz, *Das höfische Leben*, I, 208 f.; Specht, 275.

²²⁰ Montalembert, II, 695.

²²¹ Cf. *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr. II, Rer. Merov., 383 s.

²²² *Analecta Boll.* II, 211.

²²³ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXVII, 939.

²²⁴ *Analecta Boll.*, XII, 359.

²²⁵ Cf. Vita S. Rictrudis, Abbatissae Marcianensis, in Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXII, 843 ss; Leben der Aebtissin Hathumoda von Gandersheim, in *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XLV, 40.

²²⁶ Cf. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXCV, 1539 s.; Eckenstein, 253.

he says: "illa sedet fenestram, istæ in porticu resident, illa intuetur singulas, et inter puellares motus nunc irascitur, nunc ridet, nunc minatur, nunc percurit, nunc blanditur, nunc osculatur, nunc flentem vocat pro verbere proprius, palpat faciem, stringit collum, et in amplexum ruens nunc filiam vocat, nunc amicam."²²⁷ On the whole, therefore, it appears that the strict discipline to which children were subjected in convents of nuns and canonesses was to a great extent modified by the filial relations which existed between teachers and their pupils.

The rigor of scholastic discipline, besides, relaxed generally on Sundays and religious festivals, which abounded in the Middle Ages. On these days no work was permitted; not even those employed in the scriptorium were allowed to occupy themselves with writing. For children they were days of amusement and relaxation, since after the Divine services they were generally at liberty to indulge in games and various kinds of pastimes attractive and wholesome to child-life. Short periods of recreation were also granted them on school-days.²²⁸ Games were played outdoors when the weather permitted, for it must be remembered that the medieval boy and girl possessed a keen appreciation of nature. Gardens and meadows, the song of birds, the beauty and fragrance of flowers possessed an attraction all their own for these children unspoiled by diversions such as the modern child unfortunately knows but too well. Games for girls were evidently as numerous and as thoroughly appreciated and indulged in as those for boys. To play at dice or chess was a favorite amusement for both sexes. Even monks and nuns indulged in these pastimes. To counteract the abuses arising from an excessive indulgence in these games, Bishop Wibold of Cambrai devised, in 972, a very ingenious play at dice, "having reference to spiritual things," which seems to have been much in favor.²²⁹ There were also various kinds of ball-games played by boys and girls.²³⁰ Indeed, so numerous and popular were games of all kinds that in certain localities, as, for instance, in Provence, special institutions for teaching them are said to have existed as early as the thirteenth century.²³¹ Besides the relaxation afforded by the Sundays and feastdays of the year, there

²²⁷ Holstenius, I, 421.

²²⁸ Specht, 217.

²²⁹ Weinhold, *Die deutschen Frauen im Mittelalter*, 85.

²³⁰ Ibid., 378.

²³¹ Ibid., 86.

were also special occasions of rejoicing for children, on which custom permitted them an unusual amount of freedom. On the feast of the Holy Innocents it was customary in many convents that pupils changed rôles with their teachers, and at times even were allowed to manage all the affairs of the house on that day. There was also a custom which permitted pupils to make a visitor to their school a captive, who was then obliged to redeem his liberty by granting the favors which the pupils demanded.²³² If, in addition to the consideration of these facts, we recall the religious motives that inspired and controlled educational practices, according to which the child as denizen and future heir of heaven was entitled to considerations worthy of that dignity, our view of medieval school-life will, in spite of evident severity, not admit that harshness characterized medieval education, which is still, at times, attributed to that age.

²³² Specht, 222 ff.

CHAPTER V

EDUCATION AND SCHOLARSHIP

1. Types of Scholarly Women

In estimating the extent of feminine education in the Middle Ages, it is important to examine besides the educational program itself, the chief productions which were the results of that education. This is the criterion by which we justly estimate the value of an educational system. Examining the medieval educational program from this point of view, we must admit that its effectiveness, in the first place, is attested by the numerous examples of scholarly ladies found at all periods and in all countries; secondly, by the accomplishments of women in the domain of arts especially adapted to feminine pursuits; thirdly, by its practical features, considered from the viewpoint of preparedness for the duties the girl was destined to fulfill in society; and, finally, by its appropriateness, in as much as it was quite in harmony with the ideals of that age and fulfilled the conditions demanded by the status of social progress. These viewpoints the following pages are intended further to elucidate.

Although history has preserved few details, relatively speaking, as to the nature and scope of actual school-work in monastic institutions of women, we are far better informed as to the scholarship and accomplishments of women during the Middle Ages. In discussing the various topics pertaining to monastic education, and in particular to education in canonical institutions, frequent mention has already been made of the accomplishments of women, without, however, any definite attempt to cite their achievements as evidence of the effectiveness of medieval education. Passing in review over the records of the attainments of women educated in monasteries, it is worthy to note that of the scholarly women frequently cited by historians, a large number, and in several respects some of the most eminent in learning, received their training in institutions termed at one time or other "canonical."

The types of scholarly womanhood, which furnished to women, and particularly to woman in the cloister, the model for imitation in scholarly pursuits throughout the early Middle Ages, were that group of intellectual Roman matrons and virgins which constituted the famous "Ecclesia Domestica," or household of St. Marcella on the Aventine. The letters of St. Jerome, from which we obtain chiefly our information, are full of ardent admiration for the noble aspirations of these women.¹ St. Paula and St. Eustochium are the names with which medieval hagiographers loved to associate the scholarly attainments of women, whose lives they wrote.² Of all women whom St. Jerome directed or instructed, St. Paula and St. Eustochium he held in highest esteem. They were his most zealous pupils in the school on the Aventine and most faithful collaborators in his scriptural work at Bethlehem. What distinguished them especially "among all the women of the Roman world was their great and varied learning:" for "in addition to a thorough knowledge of Latin and Greek literature, history and philosophy, they had, under the great theologian and orientalist, St. Jerome, become proficient in Hebrew and deeply versed in Scripture."³ They assisted St. Jerome with their thorough knowledge of Latin, Greek and Hebrew in his great work of translating the Scriptures from the original Hebrew into Latin. So highly did St. Jerome value their scholarship, and so highly did he esteem their judgment and penetrating intellect, that he did not hesitate to submit his translations to their criticism and approval, and frequently revised them according to the suggestions which they offered. Moreover, "the Latin Psalter, as it has come down to us, is not, as is generally supposed, the translation from the Hebrew of Jerome,⁴ but rather a corrected version made from the Septuagint by his illustrious collaborators—Paula and Eustochium."⁵ It was St. Paula's keen intellect, guided by faith, which detected the insidious artifices of Palladius, "whose well-concealed Origenism she unmasked and denounced in the presence of St. Jerome."⁶ St. Marcella, hardly less renowned for her

¹ Cf. *Epistolae*, 29-35, in Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 435 ss.

² *Vita Sadalbergae, Abbatissae Laudunensis. Mon. Germ. Hist., Ser., Rer. Merov.*, V, 64.

³ Mozans, *Woman in Science*, 31.

⁴ The phrase "from the Hebrew of Jerome" would be clearer in the form "from the Hebrew by Jerome."

⁵ Mozans, 32 f.

⁶ "How the Church Understands and Upholds the Rights of Women." *The Catholic World*, XV, 258.

knowledge of the Scriptures, became the mainstay of the Church at Rome. So greatly had she profited by the Scripture-lessons of St. Jerome that, when the latter left Rome, she was often consulted by bishops and priests on questions of Biblical knowledge. With St. Paula she participated in the glory of refuting the Origenist heresy. When Rufinus and Macarius skillfully disseminated their veiled errors in Rome, it was St. Marcella who confronted them and foiled their intriguing. In the funeral eulogy addressed by St. Jerome to Principia, her foster-daughter, St. Jerome says of her: "The faith of the Roman people had been weakened on many points. . . . The new heresy had made many victims, even among priests and monks. . . . The sovereign Pontiff himself, Siricius, who was as conspicuous for holy simplicity as for sanctity of life and who judged of others by the candor of his own soul, seemed for a moment to have become the dupe of the hypocrisy of these new pharisees. . . . In this grave emergency and weakness on the part of men God made use of the far-sightedness, the zeal, the courage of a woman to keep the faith intact in Rome. Marcella, more eager to please God than men, resisted the Origenist heresy publicly, vigorously and efficaciously. . . . She stimulated the zeal of the Sovereign Pastor by proving to him how many souls had already gone astray. . . . She was the first to point out to him the disguised impieties of the garbled translations of Origen's book on Principles, which Rufinus had translated and altered. . . . She often summoned the heretics to come and justify themselves in Rome, but they dared not answer, and preferred being condemned as absent and contumacious rather than be publicly confounded by a woman."⁷

Associated with these women are usually the two Melanias; Melania the elder, whose undaunted courage and zeal for the faith made her the avowed protectress and support of St. Athanasius and thousands of Christians, priests and bishops, during the Arian persecutions under Emperor Valens; and Melania the younger, her granddaughter, who rendered similar services to the Church during the spread of the Nestorian heresy. Renouncing her high position with Pinianus, her husband, both devoted themselves to the pursuits of a "perfect life" in a quiet country solitude in Campania, where "study and the propagation of the

⁷ *The Catholic World*, ut supra, 261 f.; cf. Ep. 127. *Pat. Lat.*, XXII, 1089 s..

Scriptures and other solid works of learning and faith," especially the works of the Fathers, formed their chief occupation. They traveled later through Spain, Palestine and Asia Minor and established monasteries in several places in Africa. Here they became the devoted friends and allies of the great St. Augustine. St. Melania did not exert herself less in behalf of the faith after the death of Pinianus, which occurred in 431. "When the Nestorian heresy was making great progress in Asia and Africa, she uncompromisingly combated it by her influence and social talents, by the persuasion of her manner and the force of her arguments, . . . she confounded Pelagius himself, who by all manner of arts endeavored to win her to his side; and it is known that when St. Augustine failed to convert Volusian, the Prefect of Rome, and uncle to Melania, this heroic woman, according to Baronius, undertook to convince him and succeeded most triumphantly."⁸ St. Melania spent the last years of her life in the peaceful pursuits of study and the exercises of perfection in her monastery on Mount Olivet at Jerusalem, where she had gathered ninety virgins whom she instructed by word and example.⁹

This brief list of noble Roman matrons and virgins who wielded a scholarly and social influence of no mean estimate in the Early Church might be greatly extended. Women, as carefully instructed in the learning of the age as St. Christina, of whom the biographer says: "Christina gloriosissime virgo, gente patricia Aniciorum exorta, in puerilibus admodum annis veterum philosophorum argumentis edocta, in ratione dicendi exercitate, poetarum usa carminibus, posse subtiliter disputare, civiliter agere, metro ludere præ cunctis comitibus videbatur,"¹⁰ and St. Eugenia, equally versed in learning: "Eugeniam igitur filiam suam cum literis liberalibus perfectissime docuisset, et tam Latino eam quam Græco eloquio instruxisset, etiam philosophiam doceri permisit"¹¹—graced the Early Church in large numbers, and determined for succeeding ages the position which woman might occupy, under the fostering care of the Church, in the field of learning and scholarly achievements. On them the Middle Ages fashioned their theory and practice of feminine education, which

⁸ *The Catholic World*, ut supra, 260; cf. *Vita Sanctae Melaniae Junioris. Analecta Boll.*, VIII, 16, ss.

⁹ *Analecta Boll.*, VIII, 46.

¹⁰ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXLVII, 1269.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, XXI, 1107.

undoubtedly accounts to a great extent for the phenomenon of feminine eminence in learning throughout that period.

Among the types of women renowned for scholarly attainments in canonical institutions, St. Radegund probably ranked first during the sixth century. She was indeed one of the most remarkable personages of her time and a still more remarkable religious. Her great talents cultivated at the royal villa of Atties, where she received her early education, she perfected by assiduous reading, study and intercourse with scholars. Her studies included, as has been shown, the works of both the Latin and Greek Fathers, besides an intensive study of the Scriptures. The works of St. Basil and St. Athanasius she evidently read in Greek—although this has been contested¹²—"since these works," says Denk, "were at that time not yet translated into Latin."¹³ She showed a great predilection for scholars while at the court,¹⁴ and later as an abbess at Poitiers.¹⁵ Her relations with Fortunatus, the last of the Latin poets, are especially noteworthy. So great esteem did Fortunatus have for St. Radegund's scholarly attainments that he did not hesitate to say she surpassed even St. Eustochium, St. Melania and St. Fabiola, among other saintly women of the early Christian ages distinguished for learning.¹⁶ More remarkable still is the high esteem eminent churchmen entertained for her, a proof of which is found in the letter which the bishops assembled in the council of Tours addressed to her. In it they say: "We are rejoiced, most reverend daughter, to see such an example of divine favor repeated in your person, for the faith flourishes anew through the efforts of your zeal, and what had been languishing through the wintry coldness of the indifference of this age lives again through the favor of your soul. But as you claim as a birthplace almost the same spot whence St. Martin came, it is no wonder that you should imitate in your work his example and teaching. Shining with the light of his doctrine, you fill with heavenly conviction the hearts of those who listen to you."¹⁷

Many women equally distinguished for learning have been spoken of already at greater or less length in the course of this

¹² Cf. Eckenstein, 60.

¹³ *Geschichte des Gallo-Fränkischen Unterrichts- und Bildungswesens*, 234 f.

¹⁴ Eckenstein, 53.

¹⁵ *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Ser., Rer. Merov., II, 333.

¹⁶ Eckenstein, 59.

¹⁷ Quoted in the *Catholic World*, ut supra, XV, 363.

treatise. Their contributions to learning, either as active teachers, authoresses and artists, have also been discussed in various places with sufficient detail to show that their scholarship was not non-productive. It will therefore suffice to enumerate them here collectively, locate and outline some of the more prominent features which might conduce to set into greater relief the effectiveness of the education which they had received.

In the seventh century St. Gertrude of Nivelles and St. Bertile of Chelles are the best known and, apparently, the most eminent women in Gaul who were distinguished both for their knowledge, especially that of the Scriptures, and their ability and fame as teachers. Under the direction of St. Bertile, Chelles attained a reputation for learning which extended beyond Gaul, even into England, and attracted many pupils from that country.¹⁸ Besides the zeal which St. Gertrude showed for sacred knowledge and the instruction of her sisters, she is said to have excelled not only in an almost literal knowledge of the Scriptures, but also in an exceptional skill in the allegorical interpretation of the same.¹⁹ St. Aldegonde, foundress of Maubeuge, was renowned at the same time for a rare knowledge of sacred learning. Of her literal and religious education her biographer says: "*Puella vero Aldegundis, parentem cura diligenter enutrita, divina gratia procurante, sacris litteris est imbuta.*"²⁰ She appears to have been greatly interested in the instruction of children, as the evidence that has been adduced for the school of this institution shows.

Among the numerous Anglo-Saxon moniales who shed lustre on the monastic order at this early period are St. Mildred, who received her education at Chelles²¹ and who later became the first abbess of a religious settlement in Thanet;²² St. Hilda of Whitby, renowned as a patroness of learning, was esteemed highly by men of letters. Bede tells us that "Bishop Aidan and other religious men that knew her and loved her frequently visited and diligently instructed her, because of her innate wisdom and inclination to the service of God."²³ "The few traits of her character," says Eckenstein, "that have been preserved,

¹⁸ Torchet, 48.

¹⁹ Bernoulli, 197.

²⁰ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXII, 681.

²¹ Torchet, loc. cit.

²² Cf. Eckenstein, 85; Montalembert, II, 675.

²³ *Eccl. History*, bk. IV, chap. 23; cf. Eckenstein, 90 f.

her eagerness to acquire knowledge, her success in imparting it to others, her recognition of the need of unity in the Church, the interest she took in one who could repeat the stories of the new faith in strains which made them intelligible to the people, are indicative of a strong personality and of an understanding which appreciated the needs of the time."²⁴ Not less famous were Etheldred, foundress of the monastery of Ely, who during her short rule as abbess raised that institution to marked importance;²⁵ Etheldred died in 679, having presided but six or seven years over that institution;²⁶ Aebbe, abbess of Coldingham, and Elfled, who had been entrusted to the care of St. Hilda when scarcely one year old, and who proved herself worthy of the training she had received under that distinguished woman; Aelfrith, abbess of Repton, under whom the noble youth Guthlac made such wonderful progress in learning that within the space of two years "he had learned the psalms, the canticles, the hymns and prayers after the ecclesiastical order," are women whose names are famous in English monastic history. The tribute, besides, paid by St. Aldhelm to Hildelith, abbess of Barking, and her ambitious and scholarly religious²⁷ shows the enthusiasm for learning found among the Anglo-Saxon nuns of the seventh century.²⁸

In the eighth century the correspondence of St. Boniface with many Anglo-Saxon nuns²⁹ testifies to their earnestness in the pursuit of knowledge. Even if their Latin is "cumbersome and faulty" and their biblical quotations are not "quite to the point," the learning which these letters presuppose cannot be deemed of little value for the time in which it was attained. Of these correspondents with St. Boniface, Eadburg, abbess of the monastery in Thanet, and probably the successor of the famous St. Mildred, "was a woman of great abilities and zealous in the pursuit of knowledge."³⁰ Eadburg of Wimborne, whom St. Lioba mentions as her teacher in the art of poetry, appears to have been a zealous scholar, as, evidently, also many other nuns of that convent.³¹ St. Lioba's accomplishments in the liberal arts and scriptural

²⁴ *Op. cit.*, 95.

²⁵ Bentham, 56 f.

²⁶ Eckenstein, 99.

²⁷ *De Laudibus Virginitatis*. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, LXXXIX, 106.

²⁸ Cf. Eckenstein, 98 ff.

²⁹ Cf. Jaffé, *Mon. Mog.*, 83 ss.

³⁰ Eckenstein, 120.

³¹ *Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit*, XIII, 60; Eckenstein, 134 f.

learning are too well known to need further comment. Distinguished as a scholar, she was equally distinguished as a teacher. Her pupils in the school of Bischofsheim were so well trained and instructed that "several of them became later teachers of others, so that in those regions were none or very few convents of women which did not endeavor to obtain her pupils as teachers."³² This statement of the biographer of St. Lioba is evidently important as an indication of the causes which contributed to the literary enthusiasm found in the Saxon monasteries during the ninth and tenth centuries.

Among the most zealous advocates of learning and culture in the ninth and tenth centuries in Germany are in the first place several abbesses of Gandersheim: Hathumod, Gerberg I, and Christine, daughters of Duke Liudolf and Oda, who governed the institution successively with much renown. Hathumod, particularly, seems to have been distinguished for her literary acquirements. Agius, her brother, says that she had so assiduously cultivated the study of Holy Writ that none could be found to equal her quick and intelligent comprehension of the same.³³ He pictures her besides as a person of gentle and dignified bearing, strong of character, yet sensitive and very appreciative of the good she found in others.³⁴ In the early part of the tenth century abbess Hrotsuit (d. 927) gained distinction for her literary attainments and her treatises on logic and rhetoric.³⁵ Gerberg II, the famous teacher of Hrotsuit,³⁶ who governed the institution for forty-two years (959-1001), was evidently one of the most scholarly women of that century. Hrotsuit, the dramatist, who acquired a considerable knowledge of the liberal arts, received her excellent training, at least in the quadrivium, from this eminent woman. Gerberg also instructed Sophie, daughter of Otto II, in "convent discipline and in common law" so thoroughly "that she was able to enter into disputation with learned men and successfully opposed them."³⁷ Riccardis, "scholastica" in the institution of Gandersheim, whom Hrotsuit in the above mentioned preface styles a "sapientissima atque

³² *Geschichtschreiber*, XI, 11, 65.

³³ *Ibid.*, XLV, 45.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

³⁵ Eckenstein, 160.

³⁶ "Praefatio ad vitam beatae Mariae," in *Die Werke der Hrotsuitha*, ed. Barack, 3.

³⁷ Eckenstein, 151.

benignissima magistra,"³⁸ is likewise renowned as the teacher of Hrotsuit.³⁹ Queen Mathilde (d. 968), who had received a very practical education in the convent of Herford, showed great zeal for the advancement of the pupils of her foundation at Nordhausen and the instruction of the members of her household.⁴⁰ Mathilde, her granddaughter, daughter of Otto I, who became abbess of Quedlinburg (d. 999) at the age of twelve years, was so highly an educated woman and her conduct marked by such discretion that Otto III could without anxiety entrust her with the government of Germany during his prolonged stay in Italy.⁴¹ She was succeeded as abbess by her niece, Adelheid, whom she had carefully educated.⁴² With these women of distinguished literary abilities, who received their education in institutions of the canonical type, must also be mentioned Adelheid of Vilich (d. 1015), who had received a learned education at St. Mary of the Capitol at Cologne, and who took great delight in the advancement of her pupils.⁴³

These eminently literary traditions, found in institutions of canonesses in Germany during the tenth century, were not confined to the Ottonian Revival. Also in the succeeding centuries do we find women who excelled in learning and who owed their superior education to the training which they had received in canonical institutions. Among these women, Herrad of Hohenburg holds the most distinguished place. This famous canoness had received her excellent education under the scholarly abbess Reglindis, who was herself one of the most distinguished and most highly educated women of the twelfth century. Agnes of Weimar, perhaps also Gerburg, daughter of Margrave Riedag, and Oda, eldest daughter of Margrave Theodorich, whose literary attainments are extolled by the writer of the annals of Quedlinburg, may be cited as evidence of the literary efficiency of women in the eleventh century. Both Agnes of Weimar and Gerburg

³⁸ Specht, 267; cf. "Notitia Historica in Hrotsuitham," in Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, CXXXVII, 940; and Schurzfleisch, "Ad Hrotsuithae Opera Prolegomena," *ibid.*, 944.

³⁹ According to Schurzfleisch, the author of the Prolegomena, to the works of Hrotsuit, Hrotsuit excelled not only in the knowledge of Latin letters, but of Greek as well, and cultivated them with a freedom and enthusiasm which is truly remarkable for the time in which she lived; she did not exclude from her studies the knowledge of the Philosophers, nor did she neglect the arts which conduce to skillful speech and form the ornaments of language. She had, besides, acquired a considerable knowledge of the historians and was familiar with mathematics, as her comedies show. Indeed, all the knowledge of the age she acquired very readily, being gifted with great qualities of mind. *Loc. cit.*

⁴⁰ *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXI, 23; Giesebrecht, I, 352.

⁴¹ Die Jahrbücher von Quedlinburg. *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXVI, 18.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 20.

⁴³ Specht, 263 f.; Drane, 192 f.; *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, XV, 754 (fol.).

appear to have received a careful training in the liberal arts, Agnes evidently at Quedlinburg and apparently also Gerburg.⁴⁴

In France, Gisela, sister of Charlemagne, Gisela and Rictrude, his daughters, with other noble ladies, cultivated letters in the institution of Chelles with a zeal most creditable to their teacher Alcuin. Gisela, the sister of Charlemagne, had been trained from early childhood in the institution and had responded with admirable facility to the lessons she received from her distinguished mistresses. That the zeal for learning which rendered the convents of women in France so illustrious during the seventh and eighth centuries did not disappear, even during the troublous times that followed, is proved by the number of scholarly women found within and without the cloister.⁴⁵ Heloise, whose learning reflected much credit on the education she had received at Argenteuil, was one of the brightest ornaments of feminine learning in France after the ninth century. How accomplished her pupils at the Paraclete became in learning may be surmised from the intense interest they evinced in the studies which Heloise so ably directed.⁴⁶

In England the literary traditions of the Anglo-Saxon period also survived the distressing period of the Danish invasions. Women of noble and princely rank continued their devotion to letters. To Queen Osburga belongs the distinction of having inaugurated the Alfredian Revival of Learning, for it was she who awakened in the mind of Alfred "that passion for learning by which he was so honourably distinguished from his contemporaries."⁴⁷ The three daughters of Alfred, of whom Ethelgiva became abbess of Shaftesbury, were instructed in the liberal arts.⁴⁸ So also were Edburga, styled by the chronicler "virgo Deo sacrata," and Edgiva, daughters of King Edward, the son and successor of Alfred, first educated in letters and then in household arts.⁴⁹ If these and other instances of feminine scholarship in England cannot be adduced as evidence of the training acquired in canonical institutions, they are still significant for the history of those institutions, since they both perpetuate the traditions of an earlier period and transmit them to the period in which

⁴⁴ Chronicon Gozecense, *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, X, 142; *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXVI, 61.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Hist. Litt.*, IX, 127 ff; Jourdain, 89 ff; Rousselot, 25 ff.

⁴⁶ *Hist. Litt.*, IX, 128 f.

⁴⁷ Lingard, *History of England*, Abridged Edition, by Birt, 21. London, 1906.

⁴⁸ Polychronicon Ranulphi Higdeni. Gale, *Hist. Angl. Script.*, 111, 256.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 259.

the educational work of canonesses formed an important part in English educational history.

2. Efficiency of Educational Activity

The training of girls in household arts was, as has been shown, a very prominent feature in medieval education. It embraced, as has been seen, instruction in the ordinary accomplishments of spinning, weaving, sewing and dressmaking, as well as in the more artistic acquirements of weaving, sewing and embroidery. The importance of this training lay in the fact that the whole process of the production of clothing was entirely the work of women. The art of spinning comprised the fabrication of thread from wool, flax or silk. The ability to spin a good and faultless thread was a much appreciated acquirement in a woman. Even in this simple art great perfection was sought and frequently applied to artistic purposes, for women spun also the ornamental thread which they employed in art embroidery. Hence, ladies, even of the highest rank, were accomplished in the art of spinning. The zealous application of Bertha of Burgundy to spinning has become proverbial; Italians and Frenchmen call it "the golden time when Bertha spun."⁵⁰ The daughters of Charlemagne,⁵¹ as those of Edward, son and successor of Alfred the Great,⁵² were taught to spin as well as to weave and embroider; and Thietmar of Merseburg praises the spinning of Liutgard, daughter of Otto I.⁵³

Weaving, likewise, was either a simple or artistic acquirement of women, the latter especially of nuns and ladies of the nobility. Women wove plain woolen and linen cloth and various kinds of ornamental articles, hangings and carpets. It is astonishing in how many and various ways the arts of weaving and embroidery were employed. Articles of personal ornament, as silk girdles, borders and fancy coverings for the head, and the like, were woven by ladies of rank with much predilection.⁵⁴ Woven cloth had usually a border or fringe, "which was sometimes woven with the whole piece and formed part of it, and sometimes separately and sewed on."⁵⁵ The proficiency of women in the

⁵⁰ Weinhold, 164.

⁵¹ Bock, I, 145.

⁵² Wright, *Womankind in Western Europe*, 59.

⁵³ Schumann, 120.

⁵⁴ Jacobius, 41; Wright, 183.

⁵⁵ Joyce, II, 366.

art of weaving is also seen in the ornamental hangings and rugs, which were at times as fantastical in design as those which they embroidered.⁵⁶

With spinning and weaving was practised the art of coloring cloth and thread. "The dyestuffs were all produced at home." The cultivation of the dye plants was probably more or less attended to by men, but the preparation of the dye and the process of dyeing were the work of women. How well they were acquainted with the use of mordants for fixing colors, the few preserved church vestments and hangings show very convincingly.⁵⁷ The art of coloring cloth for garments was also much practised in convents of women. St. Aldhelm, in the seventh century, speaking of the passion for finery found in convents at his time, mentions violet and scarlet colored parts of clothing and colored head-dresses;⁵⁸ and St. Boniface, in his letter to St. Cuthbert, speaks of clothes trimmed with wide edgings of purple.⁵⁹

Sewing was chiefly practised in dressmaking. Seams were sewn with very great care; they had to be either so fine that they could not be seen or they were ornamented in some way or other. Artistically wrought seams were an essential requirement for a fashionable dress in refined feudal society.⁶⁰ Ancient articles of dress, found from time to time, are often sewn very carefully. A cape, for instance, found in 1861 buried several feet beneath the surface in a bog at Derrykeighan in Antrim, Ireland, and which is made entirely of otter skin, is sewn "wonderfully beautiful and regular: and the several parts are joined so as not to disturb the fur, so that from the outside it looks as one piece."⁶¹

Embroidery, especially, has been a favorite occupation of women at all times. In the early Middle Ages women embroidered in gold and silver thread, silk letters, pictures and ornamental designs on many articles of dress, household articles, hangings, carpets, riding-outfits and the like. Still more frequently and extensively did they employ their skill in embroidery for the ornamentation of church articles, vestments, hangings,

⁵⁶ Cf. Schultz, *Das h6fische Leben*, I, 76 f.

⁵⁷ Cf. Joyce, II, 356; Bock, I, 5 f.

⁵⁸ De Laudibus Virginitatis. Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, LXXXIX, 157.

⁵⁹ Jaff6, *Mon. Mog.*, 209.

⁶⁰ Weinhold, 116.

⁶¹ Joyce, II, 189.

banners, curtains and others less significant. The designs which they embroidered were often very elaborate and executed with great perfection; scenes from the Old and New Testaments, or from Greek mythology, geometrical and arithmetical figures, allegorical representations; scenes from nature, animals and portraits of remarkable resemblance were wrought by the skillful hands of these women.⁶² The art of designing was therefore very important in embroidery. Not only do the designs embroidered show much skill in the art of drawing, but they are at times of so highly an intellectual character, show, for instance, such an extensive knowledge of history, religious and profane literature, and even in theological learning, that Bock, among others, believes that the designing was done by men.⁶³ This view might appear confirmed by the instance recorded of St. Dunstan, who drew the artistic design on a chasuble which a noble English lady afterwards most skillfully embroidered with gold-thread and pearls.⁶⁴ This, however, was a woman of the laity, whose education or ability in drawing may have been deficient. It seems evident that feminine artists, such as Herrad,⁶⁵ who devised the exquisite designs found in the *Hortus Deliciarum*, or the two expert miniature painters, Harlinde and Renilde of Eika,⁶⁶ would have drawn also very artistic designs for embroidery. Even if they were exceptionally accomplished women, they could hardly be considered to present isolated instances of feminine skill in drawing. As to the learning which the beautiful scenic embroideries presuppose, it appears that the extent, variety and depth of learning found among women in the early Middle Ages made them in many instances also capable of producing the design.⁶⁷

To what extent and perfection the art of embroidery was carried, is best seen from the descriptions of various pieces of art-embroidery that have come down to us and the few remains that have escaped the destructive influences of time, war and ruthless spoliation. From the description, for instance, of the hood of Helmbrecht, found in a poem composed about 1240, we see to what extent the art of embroidery was applied for personal ornament, even among the lower classes of the laity,

⁶² Jacobius, 41 ff; Wright, 182 f; Bock, I, 142 f; Schultz, I, 196.

⁶³ Op. cit., I, 163 f.; Schultz, I, 196.

⁶⁴ Cf. Bock, I, 141 f.

⁶⁵ Cf. Eckenstein, 245 ff.

⁶⁶ Cf. Essen, 109, note 5.

⁶⁷ Cf. Weinhold, 116.

towards the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century. The embroideress in this instance is a woman who has received her education in a convent. The hood which she fantastically embroidered represented on the right side the siege of Troy and the flight of Aeneas; on the left a battle by Charles the Great and his paladins, Roland, Turpin and Oliver; on the back the slaying of the sons of Helke and Dietrich of Bern by Witig in the battle of Ravenna, and across the front a dance. The top of the hood was ornamented with various kinds of birds, parrots, doves, etc.⁶⁸ It may be remarked that the portrayal of the siege of Troy was a favorite scenic representation in medieval embroidery. The Anglo-Saxon king, Whitlaf of Mercia, for example, is said to have given to the abbey of Croyland, besides a richly embroidered purple cloak, his golden veil on which the siege of Troy was artistically embroidered.⁶⁹ Similarly, other articles of clothing, the dress, shoes and gloves—which were used in the eleventh century—girdles, ribands and the like, were ornamented with a profusion, richness and perfection of execution which we are hardly able sufficiently to appreciate.⁷⁰

Among articles embroidered for domestic purposes, we read of embroidered table linen. As early as the sixth century it was the custom in Gaul to use tablecloths, either of white linen or of rich and colored silk stuffs, which were at times ornamented with embroidery and gold edgings. It was not customary to use napkins; hand-towels, sometimes artistically embroidered, were passed around instead, before and after meals. Such an embroidered hand-towel is still preserved in the cathedral at Kammin in Pommerania. It is embroidered in damask pattern, representing animals and human forms, in the style of the twelfth century.⁷¹

The riding-outfit of men and women offered an excellent opportunity for a great display of artistic embroidery. A beautifully wrought and phantastically designed riding-outfit of a lady is described by Hartmann of Aue in his *Erek* (7525–7765). All parts of a riding-outfit were richly embroidered. On the panel of that of Enit is represented in embroidery the death of Pyramus and Thisbe; on another the four elements, with gods, animals

⁶⁸ Schultz, I, 325; Weinhold, 117.

⁶⁹ Bock, I, 143.

⁷⁰ Cf. Wright, 105, 182, 195 f; Bock, I, 64; Weinhold, 452.

⁷¹ Weinhold, 337.

and men.⁷² That even nuns, or more probably secular canonesses, whose extravagance in dress, according to the account of Cardinal Vitry, was already very conspicuous at the beginning of the thirteenth century,⁷³ followed the fashion of ladies in the world, is shown in the sixteenth canon of the council of Trier, held in 1327, which forbade nuns the use of gilded saddles and bridles.⁷⁴

Great scope for the display of embroidery and artistic weaving was offered especially in the large ornamented hangings, used both for the ornamentation of churches and the decoration of castle-halls and residences. These wall-hangings or tapestries called in Latin *auleæ*, *cortinæ* or *dorsaliæ*, in French *cortines*, in German *Umbehenge*, *Ruclachen*, etc., were already in use at the time of Gregory of Tours. From his history of the Franks we learn that Queen Clotilde had the church sumptuously decorated with costly hangings for the baptism of her first-born child, in order to attract King Clovis to the faith.⁷⁵ That a high standard in the art of embroidery was attained in France in the seventh century is evident from the life of Eustadiola, abbess of a convent in Bourges. Her biographer says, "she made holy vestments and decked the altar with costly hangings which with her own hands and through the help of her women she embellished with embroidery and with gold fringes, besides the hangings with which she decorated the walls."⁷⁶ By the end of the tenth century ornamental embroidery had made such progress in England that hangings of that period show most skillfully embroidered scenes with many figures. Aedelfled, widow of Duke Brithnod of Northumbria, for instance, gave to the church of Ely a rich hanging on which were embroidered the deeds of her deceased husband.⁷⁷ "These pictorial representations," says Bock, "were either weavings, artistically wrought on small looms, or, what seems more probable, were produced by the skillful and diligent hands of embroideresses."⁷⁸

The peculiarity of the exceptionally high grade of English embroidery, known under the name of "*opus anglicum*," "seem to have consisted in the working of figures in colored floss silk

⁷² Schultz, I, 490 f; Weinhold, 396.

⁷³ *Historia Occidentalis*, Cap. 31.

⁷⁴ Mansi, *Coll. Amp. Concil.*, XXIII, 37 s.

⁷⁵ Gregory, *Hist. of the Franks*, 39.

⁷⁶ Quoted by Eckenstein, 230.

⁷⁷ Bock, I, 142.

⁷⁸ *Loc. cit.*

on a piece of material, generally linen; on this the silk was worked in close-lying stitches which, following the contours of face and drapery, entirely covered the material just as the strokes of a brush in a miniature cover the parchment. The background to these figures was also covered with colored silk, but this was not worked in chain stitch but in various styles of close-lying stitches in diaper pattern. . . . Gold and silver threads were liberally used" and perhaps even jewels, giving thus to the whole the effect "of a shining, glossy picture."⁷⁹ A splendid example of the "*opus anglicum*," preserved to the present day, is that of a cope nine feet seven inches by four feet eight inches, which forms part of the collection of art-needlework at South Kensington. The pictures embroidered on this cope represent "Michael overcoming Satan, the Crucifixion, the risen Christ, Christ crowned as King, Christ in the garden, the death of the Virgin, her burial, and single figures of the apostles which are placed in the quatrefoils along the lower edge of the cope." In each space between the quatrefoils "stands a winged angel, those nearest to Christ standing on a wheel."⁸⁰ This very artistic piece of embroidery is held to be one of the most beautiful of the ancient liturgical vestments found anywhere in Christendom.⁸¹

Of the articles embroidered by canonesses which are still preserved, is a splendid cloak of Otto III. It is elaborately ornamented with figures from the Apocalypse and was probably made by the canonesses of Quedlinburg under Mathilde, aunt of Otto and abbess of the institution. Agnes, another abbess of this institution (1184-1203), appears to have taken special interest in the manufacture of wall-hangings. There are still two hangings preserved, the embroidery of which is ascribed to Agnes and the canonesses of Quedlinburg. One of them, measuring twenty-four feet by twenty, although not exceptional in its pictorial representations, shows superior skill in some of its details. The scenes embroidered are taken from the marriage of Philology and Mercury by Marcius Capella. The three female figures, Mantien, Sicheu and Sophia, and the figures of Prudentia and Fortitudo are said to be of superior workmanship. The other hanging, which is preserved at Halberstadt, is of less perfection in design and measures three and one-half by fifteen feet. The

⁷⁹ Eckenstein, 228.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 229.

⁸¹ *Loc. cit.*

representation embroidered shows in part a curious combination of the conceptions of religion and philosophy. "On the centre piece a king (God?) is represented on a throne with one hand raised, the other holding a sceptre; Cato and Seneca, each bearing a written scroll, sit on either side." Then follow groups of the apostles, the figure of Christ and various scenes from the Old Testament. As a whole, its pictorial effect is said to be that of the miniatures found in the *Hortus Deliciarum* of Herrad.⁸²

Much might still be said of the use of embroidery for church purposes, and some space be devoted to embroideresses distinguished for their skill in these eminently feminine arts. But as there is question here merely of feminine efficiency in arts, and not an historical or detailed exposition of women's contribution, what has been said suffices to show that the training girls received in domestic arts during the early Middle Ages was very thorough and efficient.

Women in the cloister excelled, besides, in the arts of calligraphy, miniature drawing and painting. We have seen that the nuns of Arles distinguished themselves by the beauty and exactness of their transcripts under Abbess Cæsaria. The two sisters, Harlinde and Renilde of Eika, were taught in the convent of Valenciennes also the arts of writing and painting. How accomplished they became in these arts is attested by the author of their biography. We are told by him that at his time many articles of art attributed to the two sisters were preserved; among other things he mentions a book of the Gospels, written and illumined by their hands, a Psalter and other manuscripts⁸³ which were in such a wonderful state of preservation that one might believe they had just then been finished. In fact a number of these objects have been found and are at present preserved at Maeseyck, Belgium. According to some authorities, the Gospels and Psalter show Anglo-Saxon influence; according to Essen, the ornamentation is distinctly Irish—the outline of red points encircling the letters as with pearls being "an indubitably Irish characteristic."⁸⁴ This fact is evidently very significant as an indication that these arts were cultivated in convents of women which came under Irish influence.

⁸² Eckenstein, 232 ff; Bock, I, 155.

⁸³ "Quae quidem hactenus in eodem loco tam recentia et vibrantia auro ac micantia margaritas fulgent, ut crederes ea hodie fuisse peracta." Quoted by Essen, 109.

⁸⁴ Ut supra.

During the Literary Revival of Charlesmagne, also, the arts of calligraphy and illumination were zealously encouraged.⁸⁵ The stimulus was furnished by Alcuin, who devoted himself with all earnestness to the correction of sacred and profane texts, which had become greatly corrupted through the ignorance of copyists. Monasteries rendered valuable assistance in the restoration of correct texts, some of them attaining even considerable renown for their exact and beautiful transcriptions. Chelles, under Gisela, took a very active part in the movement. The library of this institution acquired thus a great store of precious manuscripts. Unfortunately part of that magnificent collection was destroyed by fire in the thirteenth century and the remainder by the revolutionaries of 1793. A most beautiful book of the Gospels, a Sacramentary or Missal and a gothic Breviary, written and ornamented by these nuns, were still preserved at the latter date.⁸⁶

The art of illumination was known and probably practised at an early date in England, for it is known that St. Augustine brought with him to Canterbury in 597 a richly ornamented book of the Gospels and a Psalter.⁸⁷ That Anglo-Saxon nuns were distinguished in the eighth century for skill in the art of writing and probably in miniature painting—since these two arts were employed simultaneously in the transcription of books—we learn, as has been mentioned before, from the letter of St. Boniface to Eadburg, in which he requests of her to write for him the Epistles of St. Peter in gold characters.⁸⁸

We have more abundant information for Germany on the activity of nuns and canonesses as scribes, and the proficiency which they acquired in the arts of writing and illuminating. We have seen that Diemudis, a nun of Wessobrunn, "wrote with her own hand many volumes in a most beautiful and legible character, both for divine service and for the public library of the monastery."⁸⁹ The plenarius, or list of works, written by Diemudis herself, enumerates forty-five manuscripts. All but fifteen were scattered in course of time, and these were taken to Munich at the sequestration of the monastery at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Both the style of writing and the

⁸⁵ Cf. Wattenbach, *Das Schriftwesen im Mittelalter*, 297 f.

⁸⁶ Torchet, 63 f.

⁸⁷ Wattenbach, ut supra, 297.

⁸⁸ *Mon. Mog.*, 98.

⁸⁹ Quoted by Maitland, 419.

ornamentation are said to be of superior quality,⁹⁰ and are a splendid testimony to the efficiency of Diemudis as a scribe. Hardly less famous was Leukardis, a nun of Mällersdorf, whose knowledge of Greek, Latin and German, besides her native tongue—either Scotch or Irish—fitted her eminently for that occupation. We also hear that Emo, first abbot of the Premonstratensian monastery of Wittewierum (1204–1237), and a zealous copyist, taking note of the ability of the canonesses, employed them, as well as the canons, in the copying of spiritual books for the library.⁹¹ The nuns of Admont, the canonesses of Nonnberg at Salzburg and those of Niedermünster at Regensburg were likewise accomplished and intelligent scribes.⁹²

None of the early medieval scribes and miniature painters, however, gained any fame equal to that attained by Herrad through the *Hortus Deliciarum*. The learned authoress compiled the main part of her work between the years 1160 and 1170, the last addition to it being made as late as 1190. It was of folio size and numbered 648 pages. The work was finally acquired by the library of Strassburg, where it—together with a complete copy of it—was destroyed by the burning of the library during the bombardment of the city by the Germans in 1870. However, many copies and tracings of the pictures and parts of pictures made before that date have been preserved. The Society for the Preservation of the Monuments of Alsace has collected a considerable number of these fragments, which furnish still a remarkable evidence of the superior skill and intelligence of the famous authoress. On the basis of the wonderful completeness of the conception of the plan, and the remarkable execution of the work, it is generally believed that Herrad was the sole authoress of the writing and outline-drawing, the painting being perhaps done by one or some of her scholarly sisters.⁹³

The text of the *Hortus Deliciarum* gave "an account of the history of the world founded on the Biblical narrative, with many digressions into the realm of philosophy, moral speculation, and contemporary knowledge."⁹⁴ The text was abundantly illustrated, the pictures standing alongside of it and usually in three

⁹⁰ *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, "Diemudis"; cf. Eckenstein, 237.

⁹¹ " . . . non solum in clericis, quos ad scribendum fervide, incitabat et per se ipsum instruebat, verum etiam sedulitatem in femineo sexu considerans, sorores ad hoc habiles sollicitè in scribendo informabat." Wattenbach, ut supra, 374.

⁹² Cf. Specht, 273.

⁹³ Eckenstein, 239 ff. *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, "Herrad."

⁹⁴ Eckenstein, 242.

sets, one above the other. In the illustration of Biblical incidents Herrad followed the traditional models of early Christian art; in the representations of abstract conceptions, as, for instance, that of the contest of the virtues with the vices—which are represented as women in twelfth century dress—or the conceptions of Heaven, Hell and the Last Judgment, Herrad showed an imaginativeness and an ingenuity which have classed her among the most imaginative painters the world has known.⁹⁵ The parables of the Bible afforded Herrad opportunity for drawing pictures from real life; they are of particular interest to the student of archæology and history, as they give most valuable information of twelfth century life “in its domestic and out-of-door aspects.” In the full-page illustrations Herrad shows her greatest skill and resourcefulness. Some of them, as that of the Nine Muses and the Seven Liberal Arts, are especially remarkable, as they convey important information on Herrad’s attitude toward learning. That of the Liberal Arts in particular “shows that Herrad’s conception of ‘profane’ learning was one of distinct appreciation.”⁹⁶ Copies of the last few pages of the *Hortus Deliciarum*, which have fortunately been preserved, picture Hohenburg and its canonesses. The picture is two folio-pages in size and represents in outline the history of the institution. One sees there St. Odilia, followed by a band of virgins, receiving the keys of the Hohenburg from her father, Duke Eticho; Reglindis, predecessor of Herrad and reformer of the institution, with her hand resting on a cross “on which are inscribed verses addressed to the nuns”; over against her Herrad herself, “who also holds verses addressed to the nuns,” and between Reglindis and Herrad the canonesses of the institution, each with her name.⁹⁷ Nowhere in Herrad’s Garden of Delights do the canonesses wear a uniform dress; their costume differs little from that worn by ladies at that time.

Various illustrations described in Eckenstein’s excellent work give a vivid impression of woman’s achievement in the domain of arts, so highly appreciated during the Middle Ages. For the period in question, the *Hortus Deliciarum* is undoubtedly a work of exceptional quality and a monument to the zeal, intelligence and perseverance of women in the pursuits of knowledge.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 250 f.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 246.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 252.

Not only did women attain a high degree of efficiency in the arts suitable to their sex and render eminent service as copyists, but they also distinguished themselves at times as literary producers. The convents of Arles and Poitiers in this, as in other attainments, have gained the greatest distinction. Mention has been made of the letter which St. Cæsaria the younger addressed to St. Radegund, which has been declared to be one of the ablest literary monuments of the age,⁹⁸ as also of the life of St. Radegund by the nun Baudonivia of Poitiers, which has been ranked among the gems of literature of that early period.⁹⁹ The biographies of saints, written by nuns and canonesses, of which note has been taken in speaking of the *ars dictamen*, as a subject of the curriculum of studies, show at least the same efficiency as similar productions of that period. The correspondence of Anglo-Saxon nuns with St. Boniface, interesting from many points of view, reveals in particular the literary ability of these women. Although capable judges have found their Latin "cumbersome and faulty"—the writers rambling on "without much regard to construction and style"¹⁰⁰—other critics, and notably Wright, maintain that it compares well with that of literary men of that time. Eadburg, he says, "as well as the others of her sex of whose epistolary writings we have here any remains, wrote Latin as well and apparently with as much ease as Boniface himself and his fellow ecclesiastics of the other sex. The characteristic of their style, at least of that of the ladies, is an ambition of using rather poetical and inflated language, but this was peculiar to the poetry of the great Teutonic race."¹⁰¹ In particular, a letter of Abbess Aelflaed, abbess of Whitby, addressed to Adolana, abbess of Pfulzel near Trier, in which she requests hospitality for a young nun who is on her way to Rome, "shows that Aelflaed was well versed in writing Latin."¹⁰²

Besides these more ordinary forms of literary composition, nuns ventured at times into other fields of prose writings. The nun of Heidenheim, who wrote a short account of the life of St. Wunibald, also wrote an interesting account of the travels to the Holy Land of the two brothers, St. Wunibald and St. Willibald. A similar account by Adamnan of a pilgrimage to

⁹⁸ Tucker, *Handbook to Christian and Ecclesiastical Rome*, 111, 25.

⁹⁹ Drane, 192.

¹⁰⁰ Eckenstein, 126.

¹⁰¹ *Womankind in Western Europe*, 83.

¹⁰² Eckenstein, 124; cf. *Mon. Mog.*, 49.

the Holy Land by Bishop Arculf is considered "bald" and its interest "poor," compared with the description of the nun of Heidenheim. Her style, however, "is highly involved and often falls short of the rules of grammar," and while she is concise enough in her statement of facts, in her description "she falls into the spirit of Anglo-Saxon literature and introduces alliteration into her Latin and launches forth into panegyric."¹⁰³ Other nuns as determined as the nun of Heidenheim wrote treatises on the liberal arts. Mention has been made of Hrotsuit, abbess of Gandersheim, who was the authoress of treatises on logic and rhetoric, which were "much esteemed among the learned of her own time."¹⁰⁴ In the famous *Hortus Deliciarum*, an encyclopedic work written partly in prose and partly in verse, Herrad aimed to compile in word and picture the knowledge of her time for the use of the members of her institution. It described the history of the world with many digressions into the fields of "philosophy, moral speculation, and contemporary knowledge."¹⁰⁵

More frequently women exercised their poetic talents in literary compositions. The writing of poetry was, as has been shown, an agreeable pastime in convents of women. Very frequently the compositions treated of religious topics, chiefly of biblical incidents and narratives drawn from the lives of saints; but very frequently also, especially when indulged in as an exercise of recreation, topics less sacred, and even of a profane nature, occupied these poetesses, as the prohibition of Charlemagne¹⁰⁶ and the dramas of Hrotsuit show. They attempted, in fact, the writing of every form of verse, as is proven by the few remnants of poetry and other historical evidence. St. Radegund wrote epistles in verse in the form of elegies.¹⁰⁷ St. Aldhelm speaks of "endless varieties of metre" which the nuns of Barking studied.¹⁰⁸ Another Anglo-Saxon nun ends a letter to a monk named Balhard with some Latin verses "written in the metre used in the hymns of the Church"¹⁰⁹ and Herrad's poems are composed in various forms of dactylic metre.

The best evidence of woman's accomplishment in this field of literature is undoubtedly the poetic works of Hrotsuit. While

¹⁰³ Eckenstein, 139 f.

¹⁰⁴ Drane, 295; Eckenstein, 160.

¹⁰⁵ Eckenstein, 242; *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, "Herrad."

¹⁰⁶ *Mon. Germ. Hist., Leg.*, I, 63.

¹⁰⁷ Eckenstein, 60.

¹⁰⁸ Migne, *Pat. Lat.*, LXXXIX, 106.

¹⁰⁹ Wright, 84.

the faulty and awkward language of the Saxon historian Widukind hardly conveys a favorable impression on the state of learning in the monastery of Corvie, Hrotsuit of Gandersheim renders her institution famous through her literary productions. Eighteen of her works are preserved in the codex of Munich. Her fame rests chiefly on her dramas, which after centuries of neglect were discovered by Conrad Celtes in the monastery of St. Emmeran at Regensburg, and were finally published in 1501. In style Hrotsuit imitates that of the plays of Terence, but chooses for her matter legends calculated to edify and to turn readers from the godless content of this poet's works to the contemplation of virtuous living. While Hrotsuit uses in her other poetic works the leonine hexameter, her dramas are written in rhyming prose—rhyme being used in the more lengthy sentences, in replies, explanatory statements and objections. It has been said that her powers of delineating were almost as great as those of Shakespeare. Self-glorification was permitted no place in Hrotsuit's works. Although her knowledge was wide and deep, she recognizes the need she has of help to use her poetic talent to "ring the divine praises in support of devotion." The last two plays are chiefly of interest for the information they give of Hrotsuit's learning and the method of study followed in convent education.¹¹⁰

History has recorded the names of a comparatively large number of women who gained distinction for their poetic productions. There were poetesses in Ireland "of whom many are noticed in literature," an historical instance being that recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters, which mentions the death of Ullach, "chief poetess of Ireland" for the year 932.¹¹¹ Heloise, abbess of the Paraclete, has been mentioned as the most accomplished poetess of her century.¹¹² Beatrix de Burgoyne, a skillful poetess, composed her own epitaph in Latin verse.¹¹³ Mathilde, daughter of Baudoin V, count of Flanders, and wife of William the Conqueror, and her two daughters, Adele, countess of Champagne, and Cæcilia, religious of the Trinity of Caen, are cited by historians for their poetic writings.¹¹⁴ Emma, abbess of St. Amand,

¹¹⁰ Cf. Eckenstein, 160 ff.; *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, "Roswitha"; Barack, *Die Werke der Hrotsuitha*, Einleitung; Ebert, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Litteratur des Abendlandes*, III, 314 ff.

¹¹¹ Joyce, I, 457.

¹¹² Rousselot, I, 30.

¹¹³ *Hist. Litt.*, IX, 131.

¹¹⁴ Jourdain, 90.

also gained distinction for her poetic talent,¹¹⁵ and Hildebert of Mans praises the poetic writings of another French lady.¹¹⁶ With how much readiness and skill women at times handled poetry is also seen in the poetic prologues to biographies written by them, as, for instance, in that of Gertrude of Admont, which prefaces the life of an anonymous magistra.¹¹⁷

For an appreciation of women's share in literary productivity, notice finally must be taken of the encouragement and stimulus they furnished to men of letters, and the eagerness which they showed at all times to secure books for their libraries. Women exerted no appreciable literary influence in classic times. It was only when Christianity had restored woman to her proper place in society that her influence became possible. A comparison of the literature of the classic and early Christian period shows a very striking difference in this respect. While we cannot cite any serious work that woman inspired in classic times, we find in patristic literature not only an appreciable portion of epistolary writings directed to women, but some of the most famous treatises written by the Fathers for their instruction. Tertullian, St. Jerome, St. Ambrose and St. Augustine, in fact the Fathers generally, have accorded women a very prominent place in their writings. It is worthy of note that St. Jerome at the age of fifty-two years "had written very little—merely two or three letters and some treatises of mediocre importance. These represented the entire produce of that long life which had ripened in the desert."¹¹⁸ Only when that noble band of womanhood under St. Marcella's direction, filled with an almost insatiable desire for a thorough knowledge of Holy Writ, practically forced him to become their instructor and pursued him with inquiries, even in his retreat at Bethlehem, did that eminent doctor of the Church undertake those immortal scriptural expositions and the compilation of the Vulgate from the original Greek and Hebrew texts.¹¹⁹

The example of the Fathers found many imitators among churchmen and men of letters throughout the Middle Ages. Ideal womanhood inspired some of the first and fairest flowers of Christian poetry. Pope St. Damasus celebrated at the end of

¹¹⁵ *Hist. Litt.*, IX, 130.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 131.

¹¹⁷ *Analecta Boll.* XII, 359.

¹¹⁸ Ozanam, *History of Civilization in the Fifth Century*, translated by Ashley G. Glyn. London, 1868, II, 78.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 78 f.

the fourth century in a short poem the glories of the martyrdom of St. Agnes; Prudentius in the fifth narrated at length the history of the martyr. The virtuous life of St. Radegund drew forth many noble lines of verse from the pen of the poet Fortunatus; and St. Boniface and St. Aldhelm, among many other celebrated ecclesiastics, addressed not only verses to their feminine friends in the cloister, but treatises as admirable for their literary quality as their high and noble purpose.¹²⁰ To the zeal of women to preserve the records of the lives of famous men and women, we owe some of the best and, historically, very valuable biographies. At the entreaties of Angildruth—perhaps a nun of Bischofsheim—Eigil, a monk of Fulda, wrote the life of its famous abbot Sturmi; and Agius, probably a monk of Lammspringe, wrote that of his sister Hathumod in loving memory of the deceased and for the consolation of her sisters.¹²¹ Hucbaldus, a monk of St. Amand, consented to write the life of St. Rictrude, abbess of Marchienne, at the request of the “clerics and sanctimoniales” of the monastery.¹²² Among the more important works, for the writing of which women of this early period were responsible, may be mentioned the commentary of Alcuin on the Gospel of St. John;¹²³ commentaries on the books of Judith and Esther, written for the wife of Louis the Pious, whom Walafrid Strabo calls “lucis amica,” in appreciation of her intellectual abilities;¹²⁴ a history of the world compiled for Adelperga, the ambitious pupil of Paulus Diaconus;¹²⁵ and the Hexameron of Abelard, written for the instruction of the nuns of the Paraclete.¹²⁶

The evidence, besides, of a very large number of dedications of works to women¹²⁷ certainly bears excellent testimony to their ability of appreciating these works. The tribute which the celebrated historian, Hugh of Fleury, renders in the dedication of his chronicle (1109) to Adele, countess of Champagne, is significant, and may be said to represent in general the sentiments of authors who dedicated their works to women, both in the world and cloister. He says: “It is very just that I offer this work

¹²⁰ Ibid., 83 ff.; Hentsch, 35 ff.

¹²¹ *Geschichtschreiber*, XLV, 1X.

¹²² *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Scr., VI, Rer. Merov., 91.

¹²³ Torchet, 61; *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, Ep., IV, 354, 357 ff.

¹²⁴ Cf. Specht, 285.

¹²⁵ Wattenbach, *Geschichtsquellen*, 36.

¹²⁶ *Hist. Litt.*, IX, 129.

¹²⁷ Ut supra.

to you in preference to all others; to you who are most distinguished in our time by your birth and virtue, and who exalt the splendor of your rank by the love of letters"; and he adds in the epilogue: "I have not dedicated this work to an illiterate princess who scorns literature; I have dedicated it to you with reason."¹²⁸ The same writer dedicated a still more important work, his history of the Franks, from the time of Charles the Bald to Louis VIII, to Empress Mathilde, wife of Henry V of Germany, and daughter of Henry I of England.¹²⁹

It is therefore not surprising that women took so much interest in the multiplication of books, for not only did the diligent hands of copyists in the cloister fill the conventual libraries with a choice selection of books, but even women in the world, whose love for literature was frequently a result of their convent education,¹³⁰ had a comparatively large share in this laudable ambition. The library of Sidonius was well provided with books considered suitable reading for the ladies of his household; among them were works of St. Augustine, Prudentius and Origen.¹³¹ Gundohin in 754 wrote a book of the Gospels for Fausta;¹³² the monks of Tegernsee, in the twelfth century, wrote books for the library of some noble lady,¹³³ and the countess of Sulzbach sent a plenarium to Rupert, the abbot of this monastery, that he might have it completed for her.¹³⁴ These are only a few illustrations of a large number which might be cited to show that woman's attitude towards learning in the early Middle Ages was very frequently one of distinct appreciation, and that in consequence they availed themselves with eagerness of educational opportunities when they came within their reach.

These considerations and those of the preceding chapters have shown that the education of woman in the early Middle Ages might under favorable conditions be extensive and efficient. There were no barriers set to woman's ambition to make her own the culture and the learning of the time, except those brought about by the force of circumstances. It remains to consider whether this education equally fitted woman to fulfill the duties

¹²⁸ Quoted by Jubainville, *Histoire des Ducs et des Comtes de Champagne*, II, 251 f. Paris, 1860; cf. Wattenbach, *Geschichtsquellen*, 333.

¹²⁹ Wattenbach, *loc. cit.*

¹³⁰ Cf. *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXI, 19, 23.

¹³¹ Denk, 167 f.

¹³² Wattenbach, *Das Schriftwesen im Mittelalter*, 418.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 398.

¹³⁴ *Ut supra.*

of her position in society. To judge aright of this aspect of feminine education, it is necessary to bear in mind that medieval education cannot be correctly estimated by modern standards. Social standards and conditions during the Middle Ages were very different from those of modern times and, consequently, also the nature of educational requirements.

The medieval woman was eminently the mistress of her household. Hers was the duty frequently to superintend the work of a large retinue of servants and to take an active part in many household duties. Ladies of the highest rank were expected to be as skilled in the preparation of meals, condiments and simples as in the handling of the spindle, loom and needle. These accomplishments were required as much of women in the cloister; for they performed in turn the duties in the kitchen and produced the clothing for the religious settlement, as the lady of the castle did for her household. This demand of medieval society was amply supplied by the training which girls received both in the home and cloister, for no part, excepting the religious, was more stressed in the education of girls than the training in household arts. No example, perhaps, more strikingly illustrates how successfully convent education acquitted itself of the training of girls in this respect, than the training which Queen Mathilde received in the convent of Herford. So thoroughly had she been trained in habits of industry, her biographer tells us, "that she did not spend an hour of the day in idle rest," but either read or listened to the reading of others when she was not engaged in manual labor and interested herself zealously in the instruction of the members of her household.¹³⁵

While training in household arts prepared women to fill the position of mistress of the house successfully from the material point of view, her intellectual training, centering in religious knowledge, formed the foundation for that moral training without which no true education is possible. The importance attached to religious instruction and training in medieval education cannot be estimated too highly from the pedagogical point of view. In this respect medieval training of youth was based upon the soundest educational principles. "Learning," says St. John Chrysostom, "is of relatively small value in comparison with integrity of the soul." Education, to be true, must assist man to

¹³⁵ Cf. *Geschichtschreiber*, XXXI, 19 ff.; Giesebrecht, I, 352.

work out his destiny. Intellectual culture alone is powerless to subdue the passions; it requires more than culture of mind to make a morally virtuous man and woman. Man's character must be fashioned on Christian principles; his faculties of mind and heart must be trained to comprehend the truth and to adhere to it steadfastly in his daily conduct. This truth has been recognized by leading minds at all times. Guizot, the great French historian, said: "In order to make education truly good and socially useful, it must be fundamentally religious."¹³⁶ In the immortal ethics, the commandments of God, therefore, all true education must have its basis. They form the foundation for "the broad principles of truth and honor, for a fitting appreciation of one's own rights and a sensitiveness of justice as regards the rights of others."¹³⁷ When medieval education made the study and practice of religion its essence, it exercised a moralizing and civilizing influence which no amount of intellectual training could equal. The medieval boy and girl became, in consequence of their training, imbued with a deep sense of their duties as Christians; they grew up strong in faith and fervent in its practice. As a result, we find that religion became so eminently the animating and vivifying principle of medieval life that the title "Ages of Faith" significantly characterizes the centuries termed the Medieval Period.

Medieval education did not neglect to cultivate in girls the virtues and graces befitting a girl. Religion, also in this part of a girl's training, furnished the most salutary lessons. Mary, the virgin Mother of God, the model of all womanly virtues, was the exemplar which the girl was taught to imitate in her conduct. Modesty, maidenly reserve and retirement were always considered most becoming to a well-bred girl. Coupled with thriftiness, sincere and child-like piety, gracious and affable conduct towards the members of the household, these qualities form very pleasing features which writers depict in the portrayal of many saintly women of this period. Such impressions are obtained from the life of St. Radegund by Baudonivia and Fortunatus, of Hathumod by Agius, of St. Lioba by Rudolf of Fulda, among others; similar characteristics appear in the writings that have come down to us from the hands of women and treatises

¹³⁶ Conaty, "Religion in Education." *The Catholic World*, XLIV, 150.

¹³⁷ Op. cit., "What is true Education," XLIII, 407.

addressed to them by eminent men of that period. What gracious and modest type of womanhood do not the writings of Hrotsuit, for instance, reveal, or what devotion and affability those of Herrad. They, and others not less remarkable for sterling qualities of character and attainments, show what types of womanhood medieval education was able to produce.

Besides the eminently domestic, religious and moral features of medieval education, the esthetic characteristic is worthy of notice. In artistic needlework, calligraphy, and miniature painting, ample scope was given to the cultivation of the esthetic sense. No more convincing proof of the accomplishment of women in these arts could be found than the few remnants of art-productions coming from their hand. They prove that the appreciation of the beautiful was a very prominent feature of medieval education. What renders it of particular interest is that it was inspired chiefly by religion and was placed in turn most conspicuously in the service of religion.

If it be asked whether medieval education took note of the physical as well as the moral and mental education of the girl, an answer in the negative would at first sight appear necessary; at least it would seem to be indicated by the severe discipline employed in the education of the young. We know, however, that there were many redeeming features even in this respect. Besides medieval love of nature, the many games and outdoor sports, the frequent use of baths,¹³⁸ and evidently regular hours for meals, the exemptions made for children from the regular observance,¹³⁹ give evidence that medieval education did not neglect to consider the physical abilities of children in its system of training.

On the whole, therefore, it would seem that we are justified to conclude that medieval education was as efficient—considered from the viewpoint of medieval requirements—as modern education is. It is true that in most instances it cannot be termed highly intellectual, but it educated the child on a strictly moral and religious basis, and prepared it to fulfill its duties as a conscientious, upright and God-fearing man or woman; as such medieval education fulfilled certainly in an efficient manner the prime duty of all true education.

¹³⁸ Jacobius, 15 ff.

¹³⁹ "In omni ministerio sive ordine spallendi, aut legendi, vel operandi, vicibus sibi succedant; absque Abbatissa, vel praeter satis senes et parvulas infantes, aut certe ita infirmas, ut surgere omnino non possint, non compellantur facere quod non praevalent." Regula S. Aureliani, XVIII, in Holstenius, *Codex Reg.*, I, 372.

CHAPTER VI

THE INSTITUTION IN ITS DECLINE

The flourishing period of convent schools and convent education passed with the twelfth century. It is true that their number still increased with the foundation of new orders, notably those of regular canonesses, Augustinians and Premonstratensians among others, and the orders of nuns, as the Cistercians and Dominicans; but other educational influences became now active, which proved detrimental to monastic education as a whole.¹ Essentially the period of decline of monastic education coincides with that of the institutions of secular canonesses. The twelfth century concluded practically the period of foundations; for comparatively few institutions of secular canonesses were organized after that date—"an evident sign," remarks Schäfer, "that their flourishing period had passed and that their decline had begun, or that the general attitude of the Church was no longer favorable to them."²

As with the canons, so also among canonesses, regular discipline relaxed in the ninth and tenth centuries, so that many of them became secular canonesses. The statutes of the synod of Aachen, intended to regulate the life of canonesses, as the Rule of St. Chrodegang of Metz ordered that of the canons, contained in some of its provinces the very germs conducive to the deterioration of monastic discipline. It permitted, for instance, not only the ownership, but also the use of private property and the attendance of maidservants. This indulgence attracted many daughters of noble and princely families to these institutions. We have seen that this feature of institutions of secular canonesses became so pronounced that most of them admitted only daughters of the highest rank and of a long line of noble ancestors. What tended in particular to foster the relaxation of regular discipline in convents of canonesses was the admission of girls without vocation to the religious life. Convents offered

¹ Toischer, "Deutsches Schulwesen, seine Geschichte." *Lexikon der Pädagogik*, I, 762.

² Op. cit., 70.

at that period frequently a welcome solution to embarrassing family concerns, and to a noble lady, especially when eligible to the post of abbess, advantages and powers enjoyed by no woman in the land except a queen or empress.³ Hence, the evident abuse of placing girls in convents who in no way desired to live up to the requirements of that life.

The relaxation, which chiefly for these reasons became inevitable, contributed not only to a great increase of institutions of secular canonesses in the tenth and eleventh centuries,⁴ but hastened also the decline of those institutions themselves. Various regulations prescribed by the statutes of Aachen were discarded, in course of time, by many of them. The provisions affecting the common life suffered in the first place, as, for instance, the rules providing for a common dormitory and a common refectory. The enclosure was no longer considered obligatory and the duty of residence came to be greatly neglected. Finally, the monastic dress was laid aside when the canonesses went outside the cloister, and was at last worn, even in the cloister, only at Divine service. Instead, canonesses dressed in the fashionable and rich apparel of ladies of their rank living in the world, and in no wise differed from them except for the chanting of the Divine Office, which remained still for a long time the chief duty of the canonical life.⁵ How far the deterioration of institutions of secular canonesses had progressed as early as the first half of the thirteenth century is seen from the account of Cardinal Vitry.⁶

These disorders the Church endeavored early to suppress by its legislation. In the Lateran synod of 1059 Cardinal Hildebrand, later Pope Gregory VII, expressed in forcible terms his disapproval of the statutes of Aachen. The rule for canons was condemned as befitting "sailors" rather than canons. Not less

³ Cf. Eckenstein, 152 f.

⁴ Cf. Allaria, "Canons and Canonesses Regular," *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 111, 296.

⁵ Cf. Heimbucher, II, 80; Heuser, "Canonissae," *Kirchenlexikon*, II, 1844; Schäfer, 272.

⁶ "He siquidem adeo personas accipiunt, quod non nisi filias militum et Nobilium in suo collegio volunt recipere, religioni et morum nobilitati saeculi nobilitatem **praeferentes**. Purpura autem et bysso, et pellibus griseis et aliis iocunditatis sue vestibus induntur, circumdate varietatibus cum tortis crinibus et ornatu pretioso circumamictae, ut similitudo templi gaudentes cum gaudentibus, liberales valde et hospitales Clericorum autem et puellarum et iuuenum seruorum etiam sibi, ministrantium cincte obsequio, in domibus propriis honorifice et splendide epulantur, nec desunt mensis earum consanguinei, in primo gradu sibi propinqui, quos cognatos suos appellant. In dormitorio autem iuxta ecclesiam suam de nocte quiescunt, quando tamen ninni sibi appetunt, vel amissa sanitate in infirmitate prae grauantur, vel aliquo grauamine comprimuntur, facile eis conceditur causa recreationis et releuationis in domibus propriis aliquando tempore remanere, vel amicos et propinquos suos equitando visitare." *Historia Occidentalis*, cap. 31, Opera ed., D. F. Moscho, 347. Duaci, 1597.

severely were the provisions of the rule for sanctimoniales criticised which permitted the use of private property. The statutes of Aachen were rejected as unfit to promote the religious life of canonesses. In consequence of this legislation many chapters of secular canons renounced all property and took the regular vows of religion according to the rule of St. Augustine. Most institutions of canonesses, however, persisted in their mode of life, as is shown by repeated ecclesiastical legislation. Synods held at London in 1127 and 1138 forbade to canonesses the wearing of costly garments; those held at Rheims in 1148 and 1157, to live a private life on their own estates, the earlier synod of Rheims also the use of special prebends and private property; and the second general council of the Lateran, held in 1139, prohibited marriage, and choir service in common with monks or canons.⁷ How little this legislation effected is evident from the account of Cardinal Vitry, who speaks of canonesses dwelling in "partibus Hannonie et Brabantie, et in quibusdam Teutonicorum et Alemannorum prouincijs,"⁸ and this in general remained the state of affairs in institutions of secular canonesses.

Popes, as, for instance, Boniface VIII, still continued to interest themselves in the welfare of these institutions by extending to them certain regulations affecting convents of regular canonesses and nuns. They declared, however, expressly that in doing so they in no manner approved their rule. Consequently, those institutions of secular canonesses which failed to adopt the reform came more and more under the dominion of nobles and princes, who exercised over them a sort of lay protectorate. Interference on part of the nobility in the affairs of these institutions increased proportionately. Under their influence offices accumulated in favor of individual canonesses, and several prebends came into the possession of others, against existing regulations. As a result, most institutions of secular canonesses became towards the end of the Middle Ages merely institutions for the accommodation of children of noble families.⁹ Thus, a cut-off branch from the monastic tree which draws its life-giving force from the fertile soil of the Church, the institutions of secular canonesses, which had not submitted to the reform, became an easy prey to the Protestant Reformation; in Germany a large

⁷ Heuser, "Canonissae," *op. cit.*, II, 1843; cf. Heimbucher, II, 80.

⁸ *Ut supra.*

⁹ Schäfer, 272 f.; Heuser, *ut supra.*

number accepted the Protestant belief and the others, without the support of the nobility—which for the greater part had become Protestant—disbanded. Those institutions of secular canonesses which accepted the monastic reform and became regular canonesses, usually under the rule of St. Augustine, continued to prosper for a long time. In some of them, notably Hohenburg, intellectual activity formed a prominent feature of the monastic life.¹⁰

From the sixth to the thirteenth century, convents were not only places of education for women, but also secure shelters in times of danger. During these long centuries of social unrest and political upheavals convents, therefore, increased to a considerable extent in size and number under the force of circumstances. From the thirteenth century onwards, when social conditions became more stabilized, this attraction for convent life ceased. Those who entered did so from more purely spiritual motives. The stricter enclosure of nuns and canonesses, which the reform and the establishment of new orders brought about, fostered the spirit of the contemplative life. The mysticism of the thirteenth century found, in consequence, a ready entrance into the convents of women. While it contributed greatly to the development of art in all its forms, it must be admitted that its effect on learning was to narrow the educational horizon by its intensely spiritualizing tendencies.¹¹ On the literary side mysticism concentrated intellectual activity on the means and processes whereby the soul might tend to an intimate union with God.

The education of women in convents shows in consequence the influence of the mystic movement. While in England the education of women appears notably non-productive as far as mystic literature is concerned,¹² it is remarkable that this kind of literature on the continent during the thirteenth century was largely the production of nuns. How deeply and how widely this element entered into the education of women of that date is best seen from the writings of the religious of the convent of Helfta.¹³ The literary traditions of this convent may be with reason considered the best achievements of convent education

¹⁰ Cf. Heimbucher, II, 80 f.

¹¹ Schields, T. E., "Convent Schools." *Cyclopedia of Education*, ed. P. Monroe. II, 199. New York, 1911.

¹² Cf. Eckenstein, 305 ff.

¹³ Ibid., 330 ff.

under the influence of mysticism. In this instance it is, however, important to note that the educational work of the institution was of an unusually high standard. Its annals mention women accomplished in writing, painting and singing. The transcribing of books was pursued there with unusual ardor under abbess Gertrude of Hackeborn (1251–1291). Girls were instructed in the liberal arts, lest “if the pursuit of knowledge (*studium scientiæ*) were to perish, they would no longer understand holy writ, and religion together with devotion would disappear.”¹⁴ In general, however, where mysticism flourished, less attraction was felt for secular studies, which in consequence were less assiduously cultivated. The function of mysticism in the educative process lay chiefly in the refining and transforming influence which it exercised over the baser emotions of the human heart.¹⁵

While mysticism evidently affected the state of learning in institutions of regular canonesses, it could hardly be claimed to have exercised any great influence on studies in those of secular canonesses. Their intimate relations with the world would rather presuppose that their educational practice came under the influence of the romantic movement, the contemporary and counterpart of the mystic movement. The educational demands for daughters of the nobility from the literary and cultural standpoint had undergone considerable change by the beginning of the thirteenth century. Although the ability to read and understand Latin was still considered a great accomplishment in a girl of the nobility, the reading of the writings of the Fathers and the classics no longer possessed the attraction for them as in the past. Generally it was only the Psalter which remained in their possession. Instead of religious literature, romantic poems, tales and ballads absorbed at this period the attention of ladies of the nobility. Daughters read this kind of literature to their mothers, and court-ladies to their mistresses. Thomasin of Zirclaria presupposes that his work, “*Der wälsche Gast*,” will come into the hands of every housewife. Romances formed the most important part of a girl’s curriculum of studies. Thomasin of Zirclaria enumerates those every lady ought to have read who claimed to be educated:

¹⁴ Quoted by Eckenstein, page 322. From an account of the death of abbess Gertrude, by members of her convent.

¹⁵ Cf. Norrenberg, 63 ff.

"nu will ich sagen waz diu kint
 suln vernemen unde lesen
 und waz in mac nütze wesen,
 juncvrowen suln gern vernemen,
 Andromaches, dâ von si nemen
 mügen bilde und guote lêre,
 des habent si beidiu vrum und êre,
 si suln hoeren von Enît,
 daz si die volgen âne nît.
 si suln ouch Pênelopê,
 der vrowen volgn und Oenonê,
 Galjênâ und Blanscheffôr,
 . . . unde Sôrdâmôr,
 sint si niht alle kûneginne,
 si mugen ez sîn an schoenem sinne."¹⁶

A knowledge of modern languages, especially French, was also an essential requisite. Besides, girls were carefully instructed in the rules of etiquette, in singing, dancing, in the playing of musical instruments and the games which formed the favorite amusements for ladies at that time.¹⁷

It is evident that the requirements for the training of girls of the nobility was not in harmony with the spirit of the cloister, and that consequently their education had to be provided for in other ways. Lay mistresses, troubadours and minnesingers, and the chaplain of the castle were instead generally charged with their education. Nor was this course of training confined to girls of the nobility. The wealthier class of citizens began in the thirteenth century to emulate feudal practices. Their daughters learned not only the art of needle work—an accomplishment always cherished by ladies of the nobility—but also singing and music. Brother Berthold of Regensburg even found it necessary to reprimand in his sermons girls and women of the bourgeoisie for the vanity they displayed in singing.¹⁸

It is difficult to determine to what extent institutions of secular canonesses participated in the education of girls of the nobility. There are certain indications which would lead to the conclusion that it was still considerable. The best evidence appears to be the provisions found in individual institutions of regular as well as secular canonesses, which permitted canonesses to have one

¹⁶ *Der wälsche Gast*, 1026-1040, ed. Rückert; quoted by Specht, 289.

¹⁷ Specht, 290 ff.; *Jacobius*, 76 ff.

¹⁸ Specht, *ut supra*.

or more of their nieces with them. Frequently they succeeded them as members of the chapter, inheriting the prebends and property of their deceased relative, but it is also known that they often returned to a secular life in the world.¹⁹

From the account of Vitry previously mentioned it is evident that the education of the canonesses was of a very worldly character. The training which they received in singing, in particular, must have appeared to the cardinal very pretentious,²⁰ judging from the disparaging statements he penned on this accomplishment of the canonesses.

Regular canonesses, as well as nuns generally, still rendered considerable service in the education of girls, although the high educational standard of the preceding centuries had greatly deteriorated. In the thirteenth century girls from the ranks of citizens very frequently received their education in convents, and the ranks of the religious themselves were often filled from their number. The records of Göttweig, for instance, mention a daughter of a burgher, Eigil of Krems, who was educated in this convent.²¹ We hear also of three daughters of a burgher Hennig, who in 1268 placed his daughters in three different convents; of five daughters of a certain widow, and of six of a burgher Alexander of Siebentürmen, who, at the same time, were religious in various convents.²² St. Louis, king of France, provided for the education of the daughters of knights, who had fallen in the crusades, in the abbey of Pontois and other convents.²³ The educational work of regular canonesses seems to have expanded greatly, at least in certain institutions, during the course of the fourteenth century. In a large convent of two hundred regular canonesses at Toulouse there were fifteen canonesses charged with the office of teaching.²⁴

Convents remained important educational centers even in the centuries that mark the decline of monastic education. Certain institutions of secular canonesses, as for example, Fraumünster at Zürich, which was still a center of culture and learning in the

¹⁹ Cf. Vitry, *Historia Occidentalis*, cap. 31; Ducas, 19, 32, 37, 56.

²⁰ "Sunt autem in cisdem ecclesiis pariter canonici saeculares in diebus festis et solemnibus ex altera parte chori cum praedictis domicellis canentes, et earum modulationibus aequipollenter respondere studentes. Ipse vero velut sirenes in delubris voluptatis vocem iocunditatis adnunciat, ipsos canonicos, dum superari nesciunt, fessos et fatigos frequenter reddiderunt." *Ut supra*.

²¹ *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum*, Diplom., VIII, 75.

²² Specht, 294.

²³ *Recueil des historiens de France*, XX, 95.

²⁴ Schäfer, 7.

thirteenth century,²⁵ deserve to be noted for their educational activities. Isolated instances of scholarly canonesses show that the study of Latin gradually yielded to the vernaculars. Mahaut de Bourgogne, abbess of the institution of regular canonesses of Château-Châlon, declared in June, 1289, that she had seen and read "verbo ad verbum" a diploma of Emperor Frederic II.²⁶ Gerlindis, abbess of Hohenburg, about 1273, wrote Latin poetry.²⁷ Gertrude the Great, of the Benedictine convent of Helfta, pursued the study of the liberal arts until the age of twenty-five, when in consequence of a vision she set them aside to devote herself to the study of the Scriptures with all the zeal of her ardent nature. So thoroughly did she master them that she did not hesitate to expound them to others. She compiled collections of extracts from the writings of the Fathers, and was so indefatigable a scribe, that she may be said to represent in the thirteenth century not only the best literary traditions of her time but of the earlier ages, famous for monastic learning, as well.²⁸

²⁵ Schäfer, 178.

²⁶ Jourdain, 103.

²⁷ Heimbucher, II, 80.

²⁸ Cf. Eckenstein, 347 ff.

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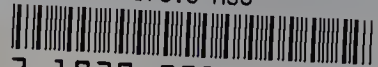
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